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Community Down: The Loss of Sergeant Joe Bergeron

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Community Down: The Loss of Sergeant Joe Bergeron

By

John Edward Helcl, II

A Alternate Plan Paper in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Public Administration

In

Political Science

Public Administration

Minnesota State University, Mankato

Mankato, Minnesota

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Community Down: The Loss of Sergeant Joe Bergeron

John Edward Helcl, II

This alternate plan paper has been examined and approved by the following members of the alternate plan paper committee.

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CONTENTS

1. Introduction: Sergeant Joe Bergeron, E.O.W. 5/1/11
2. Your new task list: The do-to rundown before and after
3. What this Means to You and Your City or County: Defining the new tasks
4. AFTER THE SHOTS: Maplewood Police Department and the City in the Days After the loss of Sergeant Joseph Bergeron.
5. L.E.M.A. and its response
6. The L.E.M.A. model for planning memorial services for a fallen law enforcement officer
7. Other Positions of Note
8. Those that came to out aid: Hearing from our Incident Response Team, their observations to help you, and how you can help them.
9. Conclusion: May you *never* have to use this report
10. APPENDICES
 - a. Survivor Resources
 - b. LEFSN Critical Incident Contact Form
 - c. LEFSN "Getting Started" for Administrators
 - d. Line-of-duty Death Policy Manual sample
11. Bibliography

Today, at approximately 6:30 a.m., a man went to an address in the 1300 block of Ripley Avenue, Maplewood, asking residents to call police saying that he was the victim of a carjacking. The man told officers that he was carjacked by two men in their late teens to early twenties. He said the suspects dropped him off near the 1300 block of Ripley residence. Maplewood police officers checked the area, and at 6:41 a.m., they found the carjacking victim's unoccupied vehicle a short distance away.

At 6:45 a.m., Maplewood Police Sergeant Joseph Bergeron went to the area of the Bruce Vento Trail near Arlington Avenue in Saint Paul as part of the carjacking investigation. A man jogging in the area saw Sergeant Bergeron's squad car, which was driving on the trail itself. The jogger came upon the shooting scene and saw the suspects flee the area. The jogger used Sergeant Bergeron's police radio and summoned other squad cars to the area. The jogger provided officers with a limited suspect description, which matched the description provided by the carjacking victim.

Sergeant Joseph Bergeron [was] a 26-year veteran of the Maplewood Police Department...

-St. Paul Police Department news release on May 1st, 2010 at 6 p.m.

Sergeant Joe Bergeron, E.O.W. 5/1/11

In an ideal world, our citizens are happy with all the services we provide them, efficiency is the key to our operations, and harmony is the mainstay of the day. In that utopia, citizens of all lifestyles understand that the law is in place to help, and that our emergency responders are there to give aid. In this perfect society, these responders are the pinnacle members of the community and respected by their peers and fellow citizens as those that uphold and defend the right of every person to live in liberty, free from tyranny, and without fear. This notion, no matter how noble, is but a dream; and as said in the Book of Daniel “*I have dreamed a dream, but now that dream is gone from me*”. No one can appreciate that more than the citizens, staff, and peace officers of the City of Maplewood.

In the aftermath of a police officer line of duty death, the impact may fade on the city's citizens first and certainly on its peace and police officers last. Somewhere in the middle is the staff and local governmental administration of the city. These personnel may feel the loss of the officer as deeply as any other person in the community, but these people must also be prepared to provide support to their local law enforcement agency in any way while dealing with the loss. That may prove to be a bit bewildering to the average staffer that is not involved with the local law enforcement agency and unfamiliar with the phenomenon of police culture and the ‘thin blue line’ (which will be further explained below).

While the addressing and tactics of how to handle a law enforcement line of duty death has been well chronicled and instructed for law enforcement agencies, it has not been well translated for the use by 'civilian' staff. The employees, administrators, and elected officials for local municipalities and units of government are often at a loss at what to expect or how to assist in the aftermath of a duty death of a peace officer.

From the intra-justice side, the International Chiefs of Police, Concerns of Police Survivors, Law Enforcement Memorial Associations, and other organizations have performed extraordinary work in addressing and assisting in the needs of Law Enforcement agencies regarding a line of duty death. These policies and procedures that have been developed are instrumental in the actions following an incident, but they are usually written strictly for law enforcement. This leaves a vacuum between a law enforcement agency and their city staff who need to be aware of what is happening and how they may (again *may*) be able to help.

The intent of this document is a basic primer to local government officials, administrators, and staff on the basics of what tasks need addressing after a line-of-duty death; and what happens during the funeral planning for a fallen law enforcement officer. It is an insight on what to expect, and how you (the administrator, elected official, or staff member) can help. Some points are repeated in this report more than once. This isn't by lack of proofread, this is to instill in you- the departmental administrator, the elected official, the public

staffer, the city manager, etcetera- to lock in your mind these very important points. This report is written with the resources available to Minnesota jurisdictions and often cites those sources, however many of these resources exist on a nation-wide level and are universal in scope. Some of the items addressed are:

- A brief outline of what occurs during the event aftermath, including outside groups that will rally to provide support for the law enforcement agency and your local unit of government.
- It will outline the system used by the Minnesota Law Enforcement Memorial Association in their efforts to aid your community in providing a memorial for your officer with honor, dignity, and pride.
- Some tips and advice directly from members of the response team in charge of Sergeant Bergeron's funeral on what may appear to be little things that make a world of difference and that there is no such thing as a 'little thing' in these situations.
- Outline an extensive list of organizations and programs available for providing aid to the family of a fallen officer.
- Also included with this information are observations, tasks, activities, and examples of actions by the City of Maplewood's non-police city staff to address the needs of the police department, the families involved, and the memorial service of Sergeant Joe Bergeron.

*****Be aware- while the services and tasks in this report refer to the family of a fallen officer, this is written for the perspective of a married officer with a family. These resources and needs should also be offered or provided for the parents of single officers that have fallen in the line of duty.***

Before addressing these points, presented below are law enforcement statistics and the outlook of line of duty deaths in 2010. Compiling these statistics annually is the National Law Enforcement Officer Memorial Fund, and are available on their website.

- **Since the first recorded police death in 1792, there have been nearly 19,000 law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty. Currently, there are 18,983 names engraved on the walls of the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial.**
- **A total of 1,626 law enforcement officers died in the line of duty during the past 10 years, an average of one death every 53 hours or 163 per year. There were 116 law enforcement officers killed in 2009, the lowest annual total since 1989.**
- **On average, more than 58,000 law enforcement officers are assaulted each year, resulting in approximately 16,000 injuries.**
- **The 1970s were the deadliest decade in law enforcement history, when 2,286 officers died, or an average of almost 229 each year. The**

deadliest year in law enforcement history was 1930, when 285 officers were killed. That figure dropped dramatically in the 1990s, to an average of 160 per year.

-National Law Enforcement Officers
Memorial Fund

Your new task list: The do-to rundown before and after

Below is a list of brief, but indispensable, guidelines for line of duty deaths and some tasks to be done before the time of need. The list may be non sequitur, but what you will experience may feel just the same way. There is, nor ever will be, a comprehensive and exhaustive list of what you as a local governmental leader will face. No two incidents, or their response and after actions, will ever, ever be the same. Prepare to feel disjointed and wanting to help without having any idea on where to start, it's only natural. Explanations of these points follow the list.

To Do Before:

- Remember, no two incidents will ever, **ever** be the same.
- Rally aid with and support your neighbors
- Contact Wills for Heroes
- Draft and implement a line-of-duty death policy
- Create an annex to your emergency operations plan

After Your Loss:

- Contact your local government leaders
- Contact L.E.M.A.
- Activate P.I.O. and control information leaks
- Cover police patrols with neighboring agency
- Provide grief resources
- Be on alert for Survivor's Guilt
- Financial expenses awareness
- Union relations meeting
- Internal communications & the rumor mill
- Prepare for planning meetings
- Coordinate benefits and donations
- Help other area VIPs and community figures show their support
- Prepare for the Funeral
- Aid another City/County in need if they fall victim to a line-of-duty-death

What this Means to You and Your City or County: Definitions

Remember, no two incidents will ever, ever be the same: This does not mean that planning is a moot point. Planning in case of the unfortunate event of a line-of-duty death is not only prudent and wise, but failure to do so will cause a systematic failure if the unfortunate event ever happens in your jurisdiction. Describing this issue is as difficult as planning for it, due to the innumerable amount of varying factors involved. Just remember to remain fluid and responsive in order to adapt to minute-to-minute changes when dealing with the aftermath of a line-of-duty death.

Unite with your fellow cities and counties: Before an incident of this magnitude happens, forge bonds between your neighbors and you.

Sergeant Tim Flor of Maplewood strongly advises “Write mutual aid agreements, have the rapport to both provide and receive aid as it were second nature.” To this, Chief Paul Schnell adds, “For departments and cities, this is not the time to be jurisdictional or territorial. Offer help to those that need, and take it if it is offered.”

Tap into the resources of Wills for Heroes: The mission statement of the Wills for Heroes foundation summarizes their purpose and why you should utilize their organizations resources.

Wills for Heroes programs provide essential legal documents free of charge to our nation's first responders, including wills, living wills, and powers of attorney. By helping first responders plan now, they ensure their family's legal affairs are in order before a tragedy hits. The 501(c)(3) charitable non-profit Wills for Heroes Foundation supports these Wills programs, giving back to the community and "protecting those who protect us." (www.willsforheroes.org)

Wills for heroes, at no cost, gives officers the opportunity to take care of the legal issues that may come up if their families suffer the loss of the officer. This will be indispensable if (hopefully never) the need arises.

Every agency should have a line of duty death policy: Consider this a cardinal rule. No matter the size of an agency, a line of duty death policy is crucial to all things from continued operations to a basic outline of what needs to be done after a line of duty death when there is organizational and emotional chaos. It is your responsibility as a leader of your community to be the spearhead in getting a line of duty death (LODD) policy into the standard operating policies of your law enforcement, fire, and EMS agencies. It doesn't matter if your city is a large urban area, or a small township out on the prairie, this policy will help bring order out of the chaos that may be happening internally with your staff. Discuss your LODD policy with your public safety executive officers and know if it is up to date with current procedures, survivor benefits, and legal findings and

issues. A LODD policy is the last thing you want to use, but one of the first things you wished you had done in it comes down to it. There are many excellent examples available from groups such as Concerns of Police Survivors and the International Association of Chiefs of Police to get ideas, or implement outright for your LODD policy. If your city/county has a LODD policy, then you deserve a tip of the hat. Now, just keep it continuously updated, and a current Critical Incident Contact Form (see appendix B) on file. In his position as Research Coordinator for Concerns of Police Survivors, Dr. John M. Violanti illustrates the needs for a LODD policy. Some of the key points of his report are:

When a law enforcement officer dies in the line of duty, it's too late to figure out how to notify the family; too late to consider how to debrief and counsel colleagues; too late to establish guidelines for assisting with the funeral arrangements

Most departments respond "informally" rather than according to a formal policy. In the 1997 study, only 39 percent of police agencies reported any type of general orders in place for handling line-of-duty deaths.

The difficulty is that without a formal policy, departments really have no guide on procedure. In the distressing time after the death of the officer, it is difficult for department leaders and officers to prepare an

orderly, caring protocol for the death. (*Line of Duty Deaths: Survivor Responses and Departmental Policies Study II: 1997*, Violanti)

Create an annex into your governmental agency's emergency plan for line of duty deaths: While not an iron-clad necessity, writing an annex to your emergency operations plan governing the aftermath of a line of duty death will help you beyond the implementation of the LODD policy. This annex will allow the municipality to smoothly activate the protocols set out in the National Incident Management System for emergency response in a predetermined structure to respond to the line of duty death¹.

It also opens up the doors to emergency funds in the response, both for the tactical law enforcement response component (e.g. special teams, mutual aid, etc.), as well as the memorial planning and operations piece. It may cost more than you think to perform a memorial that is both worthy and expected for your fallen officer/firefighter/medic. Your neighboring agencies may chip in for free, but there are many material needs for the service and procession (see the interviews with LEMA staff below). These needs and costs can be covered by emergency funds *if* a properly composed and ratified annex to your emergency plan is put into place. Additionally, the Finance Section Chief outlined in your jurisdiction's Emergency Management Plan can facilitate accurate accounting with the related costs and perform the financial management tasks if the EOP is

¹ The NIMS construct is used in the response structure implemented by the Minnesota Law Enforcement Memorial Association, in a modified format, during their response to police officer line of duty deaths.

activated. These emergency funds may also be called upon to cover the extra duties of human resources personnel, public works activities, and legal services following the duty death.

Chief Paul Schnell agrees with the addition of an emergency plan annex.

“You want to be in a position where you know you’re ok to make the decision to spend emergency funds. This is about being smart, to allow our people to make emergency acquisitions of stuff. This is going to be a big deal, and we have to be prepared for that. I think that adding an annex would be smart.”

This is a sentiment echoed by Maplewood Fire Chief and Emergency Management Director Steve Lukin when asked about introducing an annex to a local government’s emergency response plan. “Absolutely, it is a critical incident that should be treated like a large-scale emergency.”

All these offices will come into play in your response to the incident, and expenses may be incurred in their response. These are all things to keep in mind. To draft a proper annex to your emergency plan, work with your local emergency manager and legal counsel. Other resources that may provide assistance with this are the State of Minnesota’s Homeland Security and Emergency Management division, the Association of Minnesota Emergency Managers, and the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust.

Contact your local government leaders: Be the primary point of contact between the police department and your local elected officials and department leaders. Keep them informed of all the known facts as the chief law enforcement officer or incident commander releases them to you. You can rally the local elected officials together in a makeshift muster, but don't clutter the police department with your presence. Give permission to the chief, department, and response team to lock up the department to keep non-police and non-response team personnel out of the area to avoid importing more chaos into the mix. Be prepared to help enforce this decision with your elected officials by keeping them informed and by keeping them out of the way of the response and departmental operations.

Contact your local Law Enforcement Memorial Association group: In Minnesota, this is MN-LEMA, and they will be beyond indispensable for you in your time of need. If your officer has fallen in the line of duty, don't be surprised if LEMA contacts you before you even reach for a phone. The operations of the Minnesota Law Enforcement Memorial Association and their response to Sergeant Bergeron's death are chronicled in full later in this report. Many officers and personnel interviewed for this report all have echoed that LEMA is going to be critical for your city. Chief Schnell pointed out that only the Minnesota State Patrol, Minneapolis Police, and St. Paul Police have the personnel and operating know-how to proctor a law enforcement funeral using their own resources only.

“Any other department in the state, and there’s none of sufficient size to do it alone, needs to call on LEMA for help.”

Keep control of information: Immediately activate, or acquire, a seasoned law enforcement Public Relations Officer. Do NOT give any information to the media unless through a PIO, unless it is to inform the media that an official release is on its way, and to give a press conference time. In this same concept, Bruce Wilson, Simi Valley Emergency Services, Simi Valley, CA writes:

On-Duty Personnel: Interest in law enforcement matters is often high, and reports of a seriously injured or dead law enforcement employee will become public quickly. Given that the identity of the involved employee will be withheld pending notification of the next of kin, it is strongly recommended that on-duty personnel be advised to interrupt their duties and contact their own families to notify them that they are not the involved party. Wherever possible, this command notification should be made coincidental with notification of the immediate family. Employees should be admonished not to release the names of any parties actually involved in an incident until officially released by the department. (Police Chief Magazine, vol. 73, no. 5 May 2006)

Have your patrols covered by a neighbor: To ensure continued public safety coverage after a line of duty death, either city or police management should work with neighboring agencies to cover police/fire/EMS services for the first 48 hours following the response to a duty death to allow your other officers to debrief,

access psychological and/or faith resources, and to spend time with their families (both their home families and their law enforcement family). Prepare to also do this on the day of the fallen officer's memorial service, so that all the department's officers can attend.

Provide psychological and faith-based grief resources: Before an incident your department or city management should tap resources for psychological counseling and police chaplaincy services, and create a memorandum of understanding if necessary so these providers can be deployed immediately to aid officers, as well as all other employees within the local government. To find more information on what chaplaincy resources are available to an agency, contact the Law Enforcement Memorial Association of Minnesota (or your local state chapter). Other resources available are the Fraternal Order of Police, Concerns of Police Survivors, your Employee Assistance Program, or (in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metro area) the North Suburban Chaplain Corps division of the Ramsey County Volunteers Involved in Public Safety unit. Any of these organizations will have the contacts and/or capacity to address your needs for chaplaincy, critical incident stress debriefing teams, and professional police counseling.

Remain aware that other peace officers that worked with the slain officer, officers from neighboring agencies, and community area first responders can be greatly affected by the incident. These individuals may have worked shoulder to

shoulder with the slain officer, or may have known them briefly or by reputation alone. Some feel impact by the loss of a friend and close co-worker, and some become impacted as a colleague that worked the same or a similar job causing doubt and concern that they could fall in the line of duty. The families of first responders can also feel equal impact from the incident. Officers' demeanor following the incident may appear distant, aloof, or disengaged to department 'outsiders'. This isn't a slight to your efforts, and don't take it personally. The social culture of law enforcement officers is one of proud interdependence. Officers may lean solely on one another to protect their own, for mutual support and understanding, and shut out non-cops. This phenomenon, referred to often as the 'thin blue line' or 'blue wall of silence', may appear to outsiders as stoic at least, stony at worst. Police and peace officers unite and grieve in their own way that outsiders simply cannot come to understand, but they grieve nonetheless. As a local government leader, you do not need to understand the thin blue line to be of help. If anyone asks for help, provide it. Provide the services of chaplaincy, debriefing teams, and counselors by having them available on site or on stand-by without needing officers' request, but do not force the services upon them. Officers in their own way and in their own time will utilize the support these services provide.

Survivor's Guilt may happen-prepare for it: The phenomenon of survivor's guilt is related to post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and officers on the department, and even within regular non-law enforcement city/county staff may

feel impacted by it. This is something that needs to be addressed for the health of both the officer and organization, but the help must be *offered* and not made compulsory for the officers and staff to take part of. In a report titled *Why Did I Walk Away? Coping With Survivor's Guilt*, PoliceOne.com lists five points to remember for an officer when helping individuals impacted by survivor's guilt:

What can you do to help a fellow officer?

- Contact them. It can be difficult to know what to say to a person in trauma, but your show of support will speak louder than words.
- Listen. Take their lead; when they're ready to talk, be there to hear it.
- Don't criticize. They are already beating themselves up. Be open to what they're saying and withhold judgment. Offer to be an advocate, either at the workplace or between a critical family member.
- Try to hear what the officer needs and provide that, as long as it's not destructive to the officer (e.g., intense isolation or abusive drinking are discouraged). Offer to help them with food shopping, cleaning or small errands that, to them, can seem overwhelming.
- Keep in contact. The trauma doesn't end when the commotion dies down. Sometimes the real depression and isolation can set in after the attention dissipates. (PoliceOne.com)

Be comfortable with overtime and sudden expenses: Overtime hours will happen, period. Do not try to add personnel to the ICS system to reduce overtime, or move personnel into or out of ongoing tasks just to cut possible overtime hours. This will turn the ICS team into an unmanageable juggernaut and can lead to tasks and objectives being lost in the shuffle.

When it comes to the equipment acquisition component, Chief Paul Schnell summed it up simply: “These [events] are expensive.” And this is also a good time to remind public managers that being in your neighbor’s good graces may alleviate some of these issues, as your neighboring cities/counties may have ready access to resources that you may find useful, if not critical.

Set the guidelines for union/labor relations during the response: Meet with union officials (if applicable) as soon as possible to outline union-management relations over the duration of the incident response, and outline a protocol for addressing potential labor issues of high importance immediately. Keep the smaller issues, if any, on the back burner until the ‘dust settles’. This is not to say that there will be any issues- officers often will understand the situation and what is needed of them better than most.

Control the rumor mill: Keep your employees abreast of all pertinent and important information regularly and by official channels. Whether this is by memo or meeting, keep employees as informed as logistically and tactically possible.

Open sharing of information will silence the under-rumblings of misinformation that can corrode morale and response to needs by the city/county.

Prepare for running the planning gauntlet: Always make yourself available for meetings with the incident response team. You may not be needed at every meeting, so don't take it personally. If you are directly called upon to attend the meeting, don't try to play in the logistics sandbox, stay out of the operations arena and leave that to the incident response team. Prepare to be present in a support or 'resource advisor' position, not as a manager, and to acquire resources and organize support as requested. Sergeant Merci Loeks of North St. Paul Police Department (and the Procession Coordinator for Sergeant Bergeon's funeral procession) expressed the benefit of a city leader being present at planning meetings.

"I think it's important for the city manager to be present at some meetings, so if there are resources that they are aware of, it's important that they can inform the team of the availability for supporting the mission."

Coordinate benefits and donations: A benefits coordinator is crucial in helping the surviving family receive all the resources and aid that is due to them by both governmental and non-governmental/private sector organizations. In many cases this falls to the Family Liaison Officer (see more about that position in the LEMA section of the report). Whoever is assigned, that person ideally will be the only operator for those needs for as long as necessary. This is not a task that will end

within a couple of months, the benefits coordinator must continue to ensure that the benefits and funds are handled from the initial filing until these benefits are received. Some of the compensation the family files for will come in quickly, others will take much longer, and the benefits coordinator must be able to remain involved for the duration. The Family Liaison Officer or benefits officer, if not the same person, must also aid the family with continued care and support from the fallen officer's department and city/county. This being said, the involvement of the department in the family's lives depends on the family-department dynamic before the incident; as well as the family's feelings about public safety/police work after the incident. Some families will welcome all support following the line-of-duty death, some families may wish to separate themselves from the department and law enforcement without question. Gauge this on a case-by-case basis, but also look at how the department's culture interacts (or doesn't) with officers and their families now and if it will cause strife in the future if an officer was to fall in the line of duty. Attached to this report is *Getting Started: The Administrator's Guide to Free and Low Cost Strategies for Improving Officer and Family Supports* compiled by the Law Enforcement Family Support Network (www.lawenforcementfamilysupport.com)

Appendix A: Survivor Resources contains a thorough, but not exhaustive, list provided by L.E.M.A. of resources available to surviving family members from various agencies, organizations, and groups. These resources require applications in one form or another. The best resource for a family on how to

complete these applications quickly and correctly is the Law Enforcement Memorial Association and the Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association. Other resources for these tasks can include Concerns of Police Survivors, Wills for Heroes, the 100 Club, the Fraternal Order of Police, and several other organizations- including the fallen officer's department.

A donations coordinator should be set up immediately after the line-of-duty death initial response to receive, catalog, inventory, track, and disburse donations received. This may seem like a nominal, if not menial, task to some; until the mountain of donations that will- again *will*- arrive gets to be overwhelming. The donations coordinator needs to handle both the donations to the department and to the family, and both will be of sizeable amounts. This person will need a sharp sense of inventory control, as well as a need to work with the Finance Chief to properly account for monetary donations. Finally, *but very importantly*, the donations coordinator needs to properly track donations to send out letters of thanks and recognition to the individuals and organizations that provided donated services, goods, and financial donations. Never forget to recognize those that came to help you in your time of need.

Help other area VIPs and community figures show their support: This is a liaison role with other area officials and organizations that worked with the impacted police department (i.e. area elected/appointed officials, county attorney personnel, local school leaders, civic group leaders, etc.), and this should be the

job of the city/county's executive officer. Reaching out to these groups and individuals will allow for better coordination of support resources, as well as providing coordination between the individuals and the Service Coordination Officer on these persons attending the memorial service. This allows the incident response team to provide accommodations for these VIPs ahead of time, rather than being put on the spot if the VIPs just show up suddenly at the memorial service without prior notice.

Prepare for the Funeral: One of the most consuming thoughts after the initial 48-hour response to an incident is the funeral arrangements and procession. Two things that must always be in mind when addressing the planning and logistics of an officer's funeral services:

- 1) The family has absolute final say on any and every portion or detail of the services. Some families may want a full form police procession and funeral, while some may want a small funeral and no procession. Officers may be involved or asked not to attend depending on the wishes of the family. The family is the focus, and as such are the *de facto* directors of the agencies that are there to support the family during this period and in the planning process.
- 2) The funeral procession begins when transporting the deceased (or injured) officer from the initial scene.

Point one is paramount, and an absolute. Point two needs clarification. An administrator addressing this type of incident that is not in law enforcement may not understand some traditions and processes. When an officer falls in the line of duty, a law enforcement agency should assign an honor guard to escort the fallen officer at all times. Starting from the location of the incident to the medical examiner's office and/or the funeral home of choice, then from the funeral home to the site of the wake, memorial service, and finally the funeral the officer is under the constant watch of an honor guard, with few exceptions (i.e. M.E. exam, funeral home process). Up to the memorial ceremony, the honor guard can be as few as one to two officers- though in larger departments do not be surprised if a whole squadron or shift volunteers for watch.

Related to this, if an incident that leaves an officer of your department injured or incapacitated to the point of hospitalization, take similar steps. If removing an injured officer from the scene, assign another officer as guardian-advocate for the injured (or incapacitated) officer at the hospital. In addition to being an advocate, this is to reassure the injured officer that they are safe. If the line-of-duty death incident caused the injury, this will become extremely important allowing the injured officer both a sense of safety and a line of information regarding the incident in question.

Bring your experience to others in need: If you have suffered a line-of-duty death in your jurisdiction in the past, use your experiences in responding to the

aftermath to come to the aid of another jurisdiction's appointed or elected officials that have suffered an officer falling in the line of duty to help them through it. They will appreciate your insight and experience in their time of need, especially as this is not necessarily a 'teachable' skill as it is a learned experience. Your knowledge base can help a community get back on it's feet faster and recover more quickly than if they are left to find their way in the dark. The city of Maplewood and our incident response team personnel were able to find assistance from our neighbors in North Saint Paul, who suffered the unfortunate loss of Officer Richard Crittenden just months before.

Use this list as very general guidelines on how you personally may help, but never fail to immediately call in professionals to deal with such situations. Organizations such as the Fraternal Order of Police, Concerns of Police Survivors, Law Enforcement Memorial Association, and others will have the avenues to provide assistance to your organization.

AFTER THE SHOTS: Maplewood Police Department and the City in the Days After the loss of Sergeant Joseph Bergeron.

On the morning of May 1st, 2010, Sergeant Joe Bergeron was shot and killed in the line of duty ending a 26-year career with the Maplewood Police Department, as well as serving with the Maplewood Fire Department. This incident left a wife without her husband, two daughters without a father, and a city without one of its best police officers and friend to all.

In an interview with Maplewood Police Chief Dave Thomalla, he recalled the sequence of major events, and important occurrences in the first 48 hours following the shooting of Sergeant Bergeron. The morning of the shooting, Chief Thomalla was proactively addressing multiple fronts. As the shooting took place within the boundaries of the city of St. Paul, the St. Paul Police Department was the primary investigating agency. This allowed Chief Thomalla to place some of the energy and resources that would have been used in an incident within Maplewood towards personnel, logistics, and most importantly the Bergeron family.

With Maplewood Police Lieutenant Richard Doblal taking the lead as Maplewood Police Department's incident commander on scene (and then as Maplewood Police Department's liaison to L.E.M.A. for the following week), Chief Thomalla was then able to perform the most urgent duty of notifying the Bergeron family. Chief Thomalla, Ramsey County North Suburban Chaplain Corps member Nev Crowther, and Maplewood Police Sergeant and close friend of the

Bergerons Tim Flor made the notification together. Being the Bergeron's friend, Tim Flor became the police department liaison to the Bergeron family at that time. About the same time as the Maplewood Police representatives arrived, Washington County Sheriff Bill Hutton had arrived on scene at the Bergeron home, and stationed two patrol cars at each end of the street the Bergerons resided at to maintain security and privacy for the family

"I got to hand it to Bill Hutton," commended L.E.M.A.² President Mike Servatka, "no one made a call to him to do that, he just knew."

At the scene of the shooting, an honor guard was assembled and remained posted with Sergeant Bergeron's body. The honor guard then escorted the remains of Sergeant Bergeron to the Ramsey County Medical Examiner's Office, and other locales thereafter

Punctuating the pre-noon period after the initial family notification was the assault of St. Paul Police Officer Dave Longbehn by Bergeron shooting suspect Jason John Jones (Jones was fatally wounded in his assault on Officer Longbehn). At the police department, Chief Thomalla mobilized the Maplewood Police Reserves and stationed them at the city hall/police department building for both perimeter security, and to function as a donations coordination unit to receive and catalog donations from citizens and groups. The City of Saint Paul and the Saint Paul Police Department deployed personnel from their Employee

² In this report for ease of reading, the term L.E.M.A. refers to the Minnesota Law Enforcement Memorial Association. This does not reference the National Law Enforcement Memorial Association or other L.E.M.A. organizations from other states that provide support services in their respective regions.

Assistance Program to Maplewood City Hall to assist the Maplewood Police Department and its officers.

An impromptu meeting assembled with Chief Thomalla and the officers and union stewards of the police department's respective unions to outline labor relations issues within the duration of the incident response and recovery. The protocols and standards for addressing potential collective bargaining agreement/union contract issues during the incident span were set out and the agreement that any pressing issues would be dealt with quickly and promptly, rather than waiting weeks out to address the issues through union grievances. This meeting was also to control the internal rumor mill and to dispel misinformation that police personnel may have had. As St. Paul Police formed an incident perimeter to contain the other suspect in the shooting, Maplewood officers that were on duty during the overnight shift with Sergeant Bergeron were relieved of duty for the day. These officers were under order to contact their families to inform them of the incident and reassure their loved ones of their safety. The officers then attended debriefing at the Maplewood Police Department.

Chief Thomalla had made several trips to the Bergeron residence to keep the family under constant update of the status of the incident and its surrounding investigation, including returning to the residence at 3:00 p.m. to inform the Bergeron family of the capture of the second suspect wanted in the shooting, Joshua Michael Martin. At this time, Chief Thomalla received a written family

statement for the 8:00 p.m. press conference, at the St. Paul Police Department, for media release. That afternoon, Mrs. Gail Bergeron was able to view Sergeant Bergeron at the Ramsey County Medical Examiner's Office, and Sergeant Flor with Chief Thomalla provided Mrs. Bergeron with escort for the duration.

During this same period, Lieutenant Doblar made arrangements with the Ramsey County Sheriff's Department to assume law enforcement duties within Maplewood through 6:00 a.m. on Monday May 3rd. This allowed needed down time for the officers of Maplewood to be with their families, both at home and their work family, and prepare for the continued recovery to the incident.

The Minnesota Law Enforcement Memorial Association response officers had been on site at the Maplewood Police Department since the morning, but the command staff finally met as a whole with L.E.M.A. representatives and incident staff. Maplewood Police command staff used this opportunity to agree upon and assign tasks and to create unification of efforts by the staff. After addressing the media and presenting the Bergeron family's written statement at the 8 p.m. news conference, Chief Thomalla returned to the Bergeron's residence for the day's last update.

The morning of May 2nd, L.E.M.A.'s Response Team and Maplewood Police Department held a full operational meeting to update personnel on the status of the incident. Donations received by both the department and family was addressed at this time. Following a noon press conference, the police department held further meetings with L.E.M.A. to address planning and logistical

tasks. Chief Thomalla met with Maplewood Mayor Will Rossbach and Maplewood City Manager James Antonen regarding the incident, and to establish a memorial fund for the Bergeron family. Maplewood Human Resources Specialist Terrie Rameaux ensured release of a portion of severance pay to the family to handle any daily household expenses incurred by the Bergeron family³. In the case of Sergeant Bergeron, the League of Minnesota Cities quickly responded to the incident, and ensured a rapid worker's compensation payout of \$15,000 to Mrs. Bergeron.

The family was also facing the dilemma of when to hold the wake and service for Sergeant Bergeron. The family had been planning a trip to a national archery tournament where Sergeant Bergeron's twin daughters planned to compete later on in the week. The family had to decide on having the funeral before, after, or to forego the tournament. The decision was for the wake to occur on Wednesday with the funeral to take place Thursday the 6th, allowing the family to attend the tournament as Sergeant Bergeron had planned.

In a joint interview with both Chief Thomalla and Maplewood Fire Chief Steve Lukin, several items that were challenging during the response came up. These items were not impossible or daunting per se, but they were very important regardless of size or scope. Chiefs Thomalla and Lukin stressed that

³ It is critical that the agency pays out to the officer's family any and all monies due to them as soon as possible, be it the current paycheck, the year's vacation leave, or any other source that was due to the officer to aid the family in the gap between the officer's death and receiving long-term survivor benefits.

the first and primary concern is the family members and survivors linked to the incident. The issues can range from dynamics to finances, but address all with prudence and sincerity. The most important issue that will prelude or even foreshadow the task of working with the family is to consider what the family-department dynamic was beforehand. This mindset is caused by the interactions and working relationship between the officer and the department. Chief Thomalla has enjoyed the privilege of being a friend to the Bergeron family for quite some time, and Sergeant Bergeron was one of the most respected and well-liked officers on the department. This allowed a more open dialogue during the incident response and recovery period, and continues on today. Chief Thomalla was careful to point out that the department and administration must continue to be there for the family for the long-term, through the funeral, court hearings, and beyond.

In addition to the department's relationship with the family, the dynamic within the family of the officer can effect decisions and working relationship between the family and the support network wanting to help. All action on part of the department, responders, and aid groups must receive blessing by the family; and with recognizing that additional family dynamics are at work, response plans must be flexible. Within this period, the family should select a spokesperson to give brief statements from the family to the media. Ideally, the spokesperson should be a member of the family and not a member of the police department. The media will want to hear directly from the family, but if the family chooses to

assign an officer, the use of prewritten statements from the family is highly advised. In an effort to provide continuous support to the family, the responding department must prepare to activate key positions in addressing response and recovery period issues and activities. Maintaining the family's security and privacy during these times is paramount; therefore assign officers to a security detail to provide 24-hour security and safety for the family.

L.E.M.A. and its response

The Minnesota Law Enforcement Memorial Association advance party representatives during the response to the death of Sergeant Bergeron were Captain Kevin Torgerson, Commander of the L.E.M.A. Honor Guard (Olmstead County Sheriff's Department), and Deputy Mike Servatka, Minnesota L.E.M.A. President (Ramsey County Sheriff's Department). The members of L.E.M.A. provide their time and services to departments in need on a volunteer basis, regardless of position or responsibilities within the incident response.

Deputy Servatka was in charge of general oversight of L.E.M.A.'s operations, and providing support for Incident Commander Greg Levendoski. Deputy Servatka aided with processional efforts lead by Sergeant Merci Loeks of the North Saint Paul Police Department, who was also supported by Lieutenant Joseph Zoelle of the Minnesota State Patrol. In an interview with Deputy Servatka, he spoke of the role of L.E.M.A. during the planning of Sergeant Bergeron's funeral.

Deputy Servatka stated that the first action taken by L.E.M.A. is the immediate response to a line-of-duty death of a Minnesota peace officer by the L.E.M.A. President and the Honor Guard Commander or one of the Honor Guard members. Detective Servatka stated the process simply by saying, “As an administrator [you] need to know we’re a one-call shop. [Though] they do not need to call anymore, we just show up. We will be at the front door knocking, saying ‘we’re here’ and we will go from there...that’s what we do and we do it well. We don’t like doing it [*referring to the unfortunate death of the officer*] but we’ll do it very well.”

Deputy Servatka illustrated some of what government administration should expect in the days following the loss of an officer. He points out that in the initial stages there will be requests for resources, but he is also quick to point out that L.E.M.A. is itself a resourceful organization.

“We try not to use resources of the effected [organization], because it’s just too overwhelming. This is dear to their heart. They have just lost a city employee, a valid member of their ‘family’. We try to minimize the amount of request from inside that family we make. That is why L.E.M.A. is there. We’ll get the job done...we’ll get the resources. We don’t necessarily use the effected agency’s resources. That’s our goal.”

What government administrators and officials should know about L.E.M.A. and its operations? Deputy Servatka gives several observations.

“L.E.M.A.’s mission is to assist these families, to assist the survivors, and to honor those that have lost their lives in the line of duty.” He continued along the same theme, “Whatever the family wants, the family gets. It’s not what the city government wants; it’s not what the chief of that department wants; what the co-workers of that officer wants; it’s what the family wants. If they do not want a law enforcement funeral that is totally up to them...that is their decision to make. The family’s first, and city administration needs to know that right off the bat.”

Deputy Servatka spoke very plainly about resources and turnout for officer funerals that occur either outside the Twin Cities metropolitan area, or from a non-violent/non line-of-duty death. While L.E.M.A. will provide response and support for the death of any peace officer in Minnesota, Servatka points out that resources in outstate Minnesota are harder to come by, and that the manner of death of an officer can reduce turn out of police mourners. Retired officers blessed with long life that pass away from old age will garner less response than those officers killed in the line of duty will. Considering those facts, Deputy Servatka reassures, “We will leave no stone unturned, [and] I think a city administrator needs to know that. [L.E.M.A. is] a full package.”

When asked what, if any, assistance a government administrator or official might provide L.E.M.A. in performance of the duties in this situation; Deputy Servatka was keen to the idea of management interaction with the incident response team, addressing the benefits.

“The more people that are educated in what we do, and how to prepare, the better off we are.” “Someone from city government in the planning stages would be beneficial. One of the benefits is...in the long run, the city manager is a resource for us, and [we] expect they would reach out to the next city...and be a resource to help that city.”

Deputy Servatka also advocates for the use of critical incident contact forms for all public safety personnel. These are questionnaire packets used by departments to gather data on the employee's wishes in the event of their death. Completed by the employee they are sealed and filed, only to be opened by the department in the case of the officer's death. Law Enforcement Family Support Services provides a sample of a critical incident contact form on their website (a sample follows this report- see Appendix B).

The last piece of counsel Deputy Servatka would leave local government administrators with is this: “The biggest thing city government needs to know [is] you're not going to go it alone, you're not going to have this whole monumental task to deal with. You'll get offers for help, and L.E.M.A. will come in and help you.”

“They need to know ‘How are we going to handle this? We don't have the manpower!’ you do not have to worry about it. It will come.”

The L.E.M.A. model for planning memorial services for a fallen law enforcement officer

For those unfamiliar, L.E.M.A. is the organization of first response in Minnesota (and often elsewhere) for peace officer funeral planning. Minnesota L.E.M.A. (Law Enforcement Memorial Association) is an organization made up of current and former law enforcement officers, law enforcement support personnel (i.e. dispatchers, correctional officers, etc.), and surviving family members of peace officers that suffered line-of-duty deaths. L.E.M.A. provides a response system to address peace officer funerals for officer deaths from any cause, currently serving or retired. L.E.M.A. also commands a premier honor guard for deployment to officer funerals, Police Memorial Day (May 15th) at the Minnesota State Capitol, and the first Sunday in May for the Minnesota Police Ecumenical Service. To see a full listing of L.E.M.A. services and an organizational biography, see their website (www.mnlema.org).

In planning for officer funerals L.E.M.A. utilizes an incident command system mirrored from the National Incident Management System created by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. For those unfamiliar with emergency incident management and homeland security response procedures, the NIMS and ICS models are a national construct used for interagency assistance and providing public safety response to disaster situations whether natural or man-made. L.E.M.A.'s planning assistance documents summarize their methodology best:

We have found that on-duty officer funerals [are handled best] when viewed as a disaster. Just as a tornado, flood, or other major incident, your officers and community [will be impacted by] this event. This funeral will take your officers well beyond the realm of ordinary experience. As such, we recommend use of the Incident Command System as you begin planning this funeral.

(LEMA Funeral Planning Kit, 1998)

The Federal Emergency Management Agency gives the following as a definition of the ICS system:

The Incident Command System (ICS) is a standardized, on-scene, all-hazards incident management approach that:

- *ICS allows for the integration of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure*
- *ICS enables a coordinated response among various jurisdictions and functional agencies, both public and private*
- *ICS establishes common processes for planning and managing resources.*
- *ICS is flexible and can be used for incidents of any type, scope, and complexity.*
- *ICS allows its users to adopt an integrated organizational structure to match the complexities and demands of single or multiple incidents.*

(<http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/IncidentCommandSystem.shtm>)

The utilization of the L.E.M.A. model and their support services implementation is common for smaller agencies that do not have the resources their larger counterparts can access. However, agencies such as Minneapolis & St. Paul Police Departments, Minnesota State Patrol, and others may have a larger resource pool but have called upon the services of L.E.M.A. to provide knowledge, skills, and support for funeral services as well. This is possible due to the L.E.M.A. model having flexibility by design. The model must be flexible in application for the one simple but absolute cardinal fact that applies to all line-of-duty deaths: ***no two incidents are ever, nor will ever be, the same.*** The dynamic nature of critical incidents and the innumerable X factors involved will make every incident, response, and aftermath unique. Similarities will exist, but difference in minutiae or in large matters will create an incident response with a dynamic 'personality' all its own.

In addressing the response and planning process to a duty-related death, an Incident Commander and eight coordinator staff positions are utilized by the response model. These nine positions are all crucial for successful completion of the task, but depending on the circumstances, not all nine positions need separate assignment by nine individuals. In smaller responses with smaller-scale logistical issues, some roles may merge, though that is at the direction of the Incident Commander and/or the L.E.M.A. advance party. The staff positions of the incident management team are:

- Incident Commander
- Family Liaison Officer
- Public Information Officer
- Staging Officer
- Service Coordination Officer
- Formation & Movement Officer
- Procession Officer
- Cemetery Coordination Officer
- Safety Officer

These officers may have a deputy staff to assist the completion of tasks and objectives (part of the ICS model) to ensure success of operations, and the authority to delegate personnel to carry out major tasks is a foundation point of ICS. Communications within the ICS model design limits communication to one level up or down the chain of command to avoid duplication of efforts, misinformation, or gaps in communication. In appointing of these positions, L.E.M.A. advises that while the major coordinator positions could be filled by staff from the affected department if agency size permits, other agencies (such as neighboring agencies) should handle the majority of planning details, permitting the impacted agency to focus on the greater picture and family support. If this is not possible, L.E.M.A. will provide personnel with expertise in these areas (*LEMA Funeral Planning Kit, 1998*).

The roles of these command and general staff positions need further explanation. The definitions of these positions have been included to give local government staff, administrators, and officials some insight on the duties and services performed by these officers. Following the positions descriptions are pointers on how these individuals could use the help of city personnel, or what they would like personnel and officials to know. The information presented is through interviews with the people that formed the Command and General Staff for the Incident Management Team overseeing Sergeant Joe Bergeron's memorial, procession, and funeral services

The Incident Commander

The Incident Commander is the 'single most vital person' in this process according to L.E.M.A. The Incident Commander is the leader of the incident response. It is their job to coordinate all personnel, to ensure that every needed task is completed, and to see completion of those tasks without a duplication of efforts. The Incident Commander has the executive oversight and final say on the decisions regarding the funeral planning, with the exception of the officer's family- and the Incident Commander should be coordinating their efforts with the wishes of the family who have obvious direction over the memorial planning. As part of the position, the Incident Commander also receives, reviews, and authorizes release of all public statements and press releases regarding the

incident and grants permission to the Public Information Officer to release the information, or has the authority to present the information to the public and press first-hand. The focus of the Incident Commander is on the overall effort and 'big picture' of the incident and memorial planning duties. Aiding the L.E.M.A. Incident Commander is often a task taken by a member of the L.E.M.A. Honor Guard (if not the Honor Guard Commander). The finite and more focused needs, tasks, and duties are the responsibility of the respective coordinating officers (referred to as General Staff in the ICS construct).

The Family Liaison Officer

As much as the role of Incident Commander is vital to the process, the Family Liaison Officer is critical to the support of the officer's family. The Family Liaison Officer's duty is being the family's advocate and access point to the Incident Commander, making it imperative that the Family Liaison Officer maintains open communication between the family and the incident response team. The Family Liaison officer should not only be someone from the fallen officer's department, but ideally a close friend of that officer and the family. If this bond exists before hand, the Family Liaison Officer will be that much more effective in his or her duties. The Family Liaison Officer must be firmly willing to speak out for the family during this process, and be supportive and empathetic with the family, while sympathetic to their needs. The Family Liaison Officer will escort the fallen officer's family to briefings, autopsy viewing, funeral home, church, and elsewhere to be of service to the family and allow for responsiveness

by the department as the family has need. This officer is assigned and stationed with the fallen officer's family as much as possible, and ideally a second officer be assigned as Deputy Family Liaison Officer to cover the time the primary Family Liaison Officer is off location (i.e. rest, transit, receiving departmental briefings, etc.). L.E.M.A. provides a duty list for the Family Liaison Officer for guidance. This list illustrates the family-department/incident role, as well as the department/planning-family tasks, and states below that the Family Liaison Officer is to provide continuous and updated information regarding:

- Any ongoing investigation of the scene or incident
- The search and/or status of suspects
- Autopsy arrangements & viewing
- The return of the fallen officer's personal effects in a dignified manner
- Shield and protect the family from the media

The Family Liaison Officer must also receive the following information from the family to provide to the department and the Incident Response Team:

- Does the family desire a law enforcement funeral?
- If the family does not want a law enforcement funeral, will they agree to a separate law enforcement memorial service-with or without the deceased officer present?
- If the family wants a law enforcement funeral, what services do they desire?

- Date of the funeral- if possible. 3 - 4 days is best for planning a large funeral.
- The location of the funeral (i.e. church, school, etc.)
- *Determine family's wishes concerning media access to service.*

Provide this information to Public Information Officer.

Common restrictions include:

- *One or two video cameras inside set up for pool feed to all stations.*
- *Audio only inside*
- *Print media only inside*
- *No restrictions (not recommended)*

- Colors inside or outside
- Pipes and Drums - inside or outside
- Visiting Officers - Inside or outside
- Procession to cemetery, or private family committal service
- Firing Party/Rifle Squad - Three Volleys
- The playing of Taps

(LEMA Funeral Planning Kit, 1998)

The Public Information Officer

The Public Information Officer is part of the command staff and oversees their responsibilities across the whole incident. The Public Information Officer gives all public and press releases, with all releases receiving clearance first through the Incident Commander, including inter-departmental teletypes to officers and law enforcement agencies statewide. The exception to this rule is if the Incident Commander or a designee of the Incident Commander's choice gives a press release. An example of this is Chief Thomalla reading the statement on behalf of the Bergeron family, even though he was not the designated Public Information Officer. The Public Information Officer is the 'advocate' for the media and addresses their informational requests with permission of the Incident Commander and without breaching the security or privacy of the situation or personnel/family involved. However, it is also the Public Information Officer's job to keep the media in check regarding the situation. This task can go as far as filing a request with the Federal Aviation Administration to enact a temporary no-fly zone of restricted airspace at the funeral site to ward off media/news aircraft that could cause possible disruption. The Public Information Officer is the individual charged with the drafting or finalizing of a press release, and disseminates the release following authorization and sign-off by the Incident Commander. The Public Information Officer is the point of contact for all media, press, and public regarding the incident. This is a position that should only, unless completely unavoidable, be handled by a seasoned individual that has

experience as a Public Information Officer or public relations operator. If your department or local unit of government does not have someone with P.I.O. experience available, and there are not options with neighboring agencies, the Minnesota Department of Public Safety has media relations personnel that may be able to assist. L.E.M.A. stresses this with the following excerpt from their Funeral Planning Kit.

It is important that all teletypes to other agencies go through this person. [In addition] press conferences and press releases should originate here. This person should provide background information on the officer, including family information, department history, and recent photos, to the media. Resist the urge to put off the media. They will do what they need to do to get the story. Have them come to your agency for this information. If you control the release, they will leave the family alone.

Considering the sensitive nature of this position, delegating it to personnel at random is ill advised. Without question, a skilled and seasoned individual must be the spearhead for this position. While volunteerism during this time is vital and noble, this position has the ability to keep the calm of the situation, or completely fracture the stability of the incident and the fallen officer's family.

On a related note to the actual *location* of the media during their coverage to the line-of-duty death, Sergeant Tim Flor had an insight highly valuable to administrators and officials.

“Set up the media elsewhere so department officers aren’t constantly reminded of the incident by cameras at the police department.”

The Staging Officer

The Staging Officer is the individual in charge of the geographical areas that will accommodate the reception and assembly areas for incoming peace officers from attending departments, designate an area for muster⁴, and coordinate the line-up of police vehicles for the law enforcement procession. These officer numbers will vary greatly depending on the nature of the officer’s death, geographical location of the jurisdiction, and other factors. The officers may come from nearby agencies, statewide, other states (neighboring or distant), and even in some cases internationally⁵. The Staging Officer must deal with the logistics of parking a large amount of emergency vehicles⁶ in (or within reasonable proximity of) the staging area, and plan for overflow parking. The Staging Officer will often implement a parking detail to provide direction to incoming officers on parking procedures and placement. Staging these incoming squads involves the coordination of times with the other Command & General Staff Officers regarding arrival times for staging purposes of the incoming visiting officers. The Staging Officer is in charge of acquiring and deploying water or

⁴ Muster is the area for parking for multiple law enforcement vehicles from large departments, or vehicles not used in the procession.

⁵ Example: The Royal Canadian Mounted Police attended the memorial services for four slain Lakewood (WA) police officers in December 2009; and have paid their respects elsewhere on many occasions.

⁶ In the case of Sergeant Bergeron’s funeral procession, there an estimated 850-900 law enforcement patrol cars in attendance alone, not counting fire, EMS, or other vehicles.

warm beverages (depending on the weather or season) for the officers waiting in the staging area, as well as restroom facilities/'satellites' for those officers; tasks performed often working with the Safety Officer.

Once these duties are successfully completed, the Staging Officer has more work to do. The incoming officers need a briefing and instructions on the plan and schedule of the services. This includes expectations of service coordinators for officers regarding drill & ceremony procedures, seating logistics, movement, and procession procedures. A safety briefing (drafted by the Safety Officer) outlining facilities, water, emergency medical access, weather emergencies, weather-related injury treatment (heat exposure, frostbite, etc.), vehicle procession, and traffic safety must also be given to all attending officers. All these responsibilities fall squarely on the Staging Officer and are part of his or her duties.

The Service Coordination Officer

The Service Coordination Officer position addresses the logistics of the funeral service, primarily the memorial services. Part of this position is acting as the incident response liaison with the funeral director, church staff, and clergy. This individual works in close partnership with the Family Liaison Officer to ensure the family of the fallen officer has their wishes carried out for the funeral service. The service coordinator works closely with both funeral home personnel and the service official ensuring the family's expectations have representation in

the process. In addition to this task, the Service Coordination Officer includes and coordinates officer honors requested by the family. These honors can include the march of a color guard and the posting of the colors⁷, and the ramp guard⁸ for the service.

The Service Coordination Officer begins their tasks as soon as the family has selected a funeral home. The Service Coordination Officer then attends the first meeting between funeral home staff and the family of the fallen officer. This allows the Service Coordination Officer to begin the appropriate planning of services. Along with the above tasks, this individual has to take on the coordination of seating for the service, which can get complicated. The location of the service will dictate primary seating layout, the need for overflow seating, special seating, indoor or outdoor seating, and other considerations. The family of the officer and their fellow officers from their department will usually take precedence on seating, but there are special circumstances for the coordinator to keep in mind. These circumstances can include the attendance of the state's governor and attorney general (as is often the case in Minnesota), spouses of the affected department's officers, elected officials from the department's jurisdiction, visiting officers, other dignitaries, and potentially other past police survivors or the families of previously fallen officers. The Service Coordination Officer must plan for the movement, times of arrival, and facility access/egress points by working in conjunction with the Staging Officer and the Formation and Movement Officer.

⁷ The term 'colors' refers to the ceremonial carrying and flying of the U.S., state, agency, and other official flags found in military honors or requested by the family.

⁸ Officers that line the casket procession route at the memorial and cemetery locations.

The Service Coordination Officer must also address usher coordination, arrange use of a public address system if needed, and plan the location of closed circuit television cameras and/or media cameras (if applicable). The Service Coordination Officer must also be prepared to give the drill & ceremony commands to attending officers and public to stand for the presentation, posting, and retiring of the colors. Finally, the least needed but crucial duty of the Service Coordination Officer is the ability to be a problem solver, troubleshooter, decision-maker, and make the executive decisions on issues to take care of issues or problems soon as they appear and not a moment later.

The Formation and Movement Officer

The Formation and Movement Officer oversees the movement of all attending, non-honor guard affiliated officers on foot at the service and internment locations. Officers at the memorial location are to assemble in formations, ranks, and divisions as numbers, space, and Incident Command allows under direction of the Formation and Movement Officer. The Formation and Movement Officer gives all commands on the movement, marching, covering and uncovering (donning and removing of headwear), providing lanes of movement for the Honor Guard, Escort Guard, and formation of the Ramp Guard, and gives the commands for all present to render the appropriate honors to the casket of the fallen officer (salutes, etc.). To simplify this concept (or possibly over-simplify it), an example is if the Incident Commander is the field

general of the situation then the Formation and Movement Officer is the drill instructor or platoon leader giving the march commands for drill and ceremony. The Formation and Movement Officer will coordinate assembly times with the incident command and general staff that work with the staging, service, and processional timeframes; as well as commanding those movements. This can be a large task depending on the size of attendees coupled with the available space. Minnesota L.E.M.A. President Mike Servatka illustrated this by pointing out there were an estimated 4000 law enforcement officers in attendance at Sergeant Joe Bergeron's funeral service at the St. Paul Cathedral.

The Procession Officer

The Procession Officer is the workhorse position of the incident response team. The L.E.M.A. Funeral Planning Kit unmistakably declares this as "the most labor intensive activity of the funeral" (L.E.M.A., p. 9). While the Formation and Movement Officer is in charge of the logistics of officers in the set locations of the funeral and cemetery, the Procession Officer dictates all movement between and in transit to and from these locales. The Procession Officer must plot out the route of the funeral procession in accordance to the wishes of the family, while taking input from the fallen officer's agency, that agency's local government management and elected officials, and the Incident Commander. The Procession Officer must also take into account roadway capacities/size, construction activities, detours, time of day traffic, and residential areas when plotting the path

of travel. The Procession Officer coordinates the use of traffic control assistance from outside agencies including volunteer personnel, as well as informing and alerting residents along the procession route of the activities, and to post temporary 'no parking' signage as needed. The Procession Officer will work closely with other law enforcement agencies as well as city streets/public works departments, county highway offices, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, and local fire agencies for barricading streets to through traffic and provide detour provisions for motorists along the procession route. Included within these duties are assessing and planning traffic control points, assigning personnel to those points, and setting the times to begin diverting traffic and closing the route to general traffic.

The Procession Officer also must plan for contingencies regarding medical assistance and potential accident response needs in the procession, making provisions for towing services in case of a vehicle breakdown during the procession, and coordinating communications with units within the procession. The Procession Officer has to juggle a large amount of interwoven tasks to ensure the safe and successful movement of all service attendees, *the most important of these being the family*. It is the policy of LEMA that the attending family never waits at the gravesite for the procession to file in. The procession starts before the family begins departure for the internment site, so the family may swiftly travel to the officer's final resting place. In its operations, LEMA is adamant about this.

“The family waits for nobody. The family never waits at the cemetery, at the graveside. The procession can take easily over an hour, and the family does not need to sit there in the cemetery waiting after an ordeal like this,” Minnesota LEMA President Mike Servatka stated unwaveringly, “The family is our first and primary concern at all times.” This leads to two respective processions within the event as a whole. First is the law enforcement procession, then followed by the family’s procession to keep the family from having to wait in, and through, the law enforcement procession.

The Procession Officer will often lean heavily on volunteer agencies that are ready and willing to assist. In the procession for Sergeant Bergeron, the City of Maplewood and Procession Officer Sergeant Merci Loeks (of the North St. Paul Police Department) received assistance by over 100 personnel from the following agencies:

TRAFFIC SUPPORTING UNITS:

Patrol Units:

Ramsey County Sheriff’s Water Patrol Unit

Ramsey County Sheriff’s Lakes and Trails Unit

CSO Units:

Farmington Police Department CSO Unit

South Saint Paul Police Department CSO Unit

Reserve Units:

Maplewood Police Reserves

Saint Paul Police Department Reserves

South Saint Paul Police Department Reserves

New Brighton Police Department Reserves

Saint Anthony Police Department Reserves

West Saint Paul Police Department Reserves

Ramsey Police Department Reserves

Washington County Sheriff's Department Reserve Unit

Hastings Police Department Reserves

Crystal Police Department Reserves

Saint Paul Park Police Department Reserves

White Bear Lake Police Department Reserves

Scott County Sheriff's Department Reserve Unit

Roseville Police Department Reserves

Saint Louis Park Police Department Reserves

Mendota Heights Police Department Reserves

Fridley Police Department Reserves

Rosemount Police Department Reserves

Lino Lakes Police Department Reserves

Champlin Police Department Reserves

Explorer Units:

Ramsey County Sheriff's Department Law Enforcement Explorers

Non-Law Enforcement Departments:

City of Maplewood Public Works Department

MN Dept. of Transportation

These personnel and volunteers were used to successfully secure and maintain a nearly sixteen-mile procession route that carved through four different cities starting in the heart of downtown St. Paul and ending at St. John's Cemetery in the city of Little Canada following some of the most travelled city streets in the area.

The Cemetery Coordination Officer

The Cemetery Coordination Officer is responsible for the committal and memorial service at the fallen officer's place of final rest. The Cemetery Coordination Officer oversees the activities at the cemetery in the same way the Service Coordination Officer handles the pre-processional services. To a certain degree, the Cemetery Coordination Officer must also perform tasks similar to the Staging Officer and a formation commander.

It is the job of the Cemetery Coordination Officer to determine logistics of the service, placement of attendees, parking of potentially hundreds of police cars and emergency vehicles (not forgetting the personal vehicles of attendees, limousines of family members, hearse, etc.) and movement issues. The Cemetery Coordination Officer must find the gravesite and then determine the

spatial logistics of placing hundreds of people with equal observation potential if possible. Standing (or seated as the situation dictates) locations for the family, fellow officers of the deceased officer's department, visiting officers and dignitaries, and members of the public and media (if either are allowed by the fallen officer's family) must be designated by the Cemetery Coordination Officer as well. The Cemetery Coordination Officer must also prepare for the involvement and movement of a firing party for a rifle volley, pipe and drum corps, mounted escort, and bugler if the family requests such services. Collaboration between the Cemetery Coordination Officer and the Formation and Movement Officer is critical for this stage of the process.

In addition to potential issues of close proximity at the gravesite, the Cemetery Coordination Officer addresses the need for public announcement equipment for the site, availability of water and restroom facilities for the officers that are in formation and/or waiting arrival of the officer's remains and their family, and a first-aid/EMS station for attendees as needed.

The Safety Officer

The Safety Officer is part of the command staff, and like the Public Information Officer oversees their responsibilities across the whole incident. The Safety Officer overlooks the entire process and acts as an advocate for all incident personnel and attendees by promoting safe practices. The Safety Officer must maintain situational awareness and advise the Incident Commander if

enacting contingency plans for the safety of all involved. The Safety Officer has a certain amount of 'veto' ability over the Incident Commander as part of this position. Due to this responsibility, the Safety Officer must always prepare and plan for medical assistance of those involved, contingencies due to changes in weather, building capacity issues, cancellation causes and issues, and several other components. This position has a scope of duty that interacts with all of the coordinating officer positions. As the coordinating officers duties are focused responsibilities and usually focus on one specified area of concern, they differ from the Public Information and Safety Officers whom have an umbrella oversight of the total incident response.

Other positions of note

The Honor Guard Commander is part of the L.E.M.A. Incident Response Team, and has a highly specialized function for the incident response. As such, direct interaction between the Honor Guard Commander and local government administration can be limited, if needed at all.

There are additional assignments that are in addition to the funeral planning kit personnel outlined by L.E.M.A. These positions may lack the universal applicability as the personnel listed above, however this does not mean one can overlook these positions or force-fit them to your needs in a law

enforcement memorial situation. The Volunteer Coordinator is not a Command or General Staff position in the L.E.M.A. system, but functions as support for them.

The Volunteer Coordinator has some roles of note. They are the point of contact for volunteer agencies to check in and register with the response team to track these groups and inventory them regarding the resources they can bring for use. The Volunteer Coordinator works with the Incident Commander regarding where to deploy volunteer resources for optimal use, and the coordinator may obtain further volunteer resources if deemed necessary by the Incident Commander.

During the response and aftermath to Sergeant Bergeron's line-of-duty death, there was work by personnel outside the police department performed to aid the family of Sergeant Bergeron.

Terrie Rameaux, Human Resources Coordinator for the City of Maplewood, was at work ensuring proper disbursement of all due benefits to the Bergeron family. Mrs. Rameaux was responsible for submitting a workers-compensation injury report with the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust, as well as filing notices with the Public Employees Retirement Association of Minnesota (PERA), and Minnesota Life. She worked closely with the claims adjuster to ensure that any accounts payable for funeral expenses by the city or the Bergeron family were covered⁹.

⁹ The League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust will cover up to \$15,000 in eligible funeral expenses

“Between the claims adjuster and I, we wanted to make sure Gail [Bergeron], *and* the police department, forwarded invoices that they received and may have paid to give them to me to forward to work-comp to make sure they were paid for.”

“Because it was so public, I had PERA call me right away that Monday morning after the incident.” When asked how the claimant process was from a human resources perspective, Mrs. Rameaux stated, “I thought everything went very well. Work-comp was already aware of it- they contacted me first. PERA contacted me first. I knew to contact Minnesota Life. Those are the critical things...so that [Gail] has some money coming in, especially right away. So I think everything really went well, the turnaround was quite quick with work-comp, PERA, and Minnesota Life.”

According to Mrs. Rameaux, not only were the responses by these organizations quick, but so were the payments of benefits to Mrs. Bergeron. Depending on many factors, this may just be the beginning of benefits due to survivor families, and these families will have continuing questions. They may receive all the information the days immediately following the loss of their family member, but there is so much data placed at the feet of the family that it can get lost in the shuffle from overload.

“[Gail’s] had a lot of benefit questions here and there, the ‘what ifs’, so I’m...there to answer any questions she has pertaining to the benefits.” Mrs. Rameaux also has been assisting with establishing continued health care

coverage through COBRA to continue indefinitely, should the family chose to utilize that option.

When asked what one thing local government administrators should know regarding human resources operations during these times, Mrs. Rameaux made this observation: "I think that they already know that under these circumstances people are going to pull together and do what they need to do and H.R. is going to do what they need to do. Trust that people are doing their job, even in the tough times. And, we did."

**Those that came to out aid: Hearing from our Incident Response Team,
their observations to help you, and how you can help them.**

Family Liaison Officer: Sergeant Tim Flor, Maplewood Police Department.

In his role as the Family Liaison Officer, Sergeant Tim Flor was deeply entrenched with the incident of Sergeant Bergeron's death. Sergeants Bergeron and Flor were not only co-workers, but also best friends. Their families also were bonded together, adding dimensions to Sergeant Flor's duties. In an interview with Sergeant Flor, he summarized what duties he had to perform and what advice he would give to other officers in his situation.

Sergeant Flor's experience in this role received support from a neighboring agency. North Saint Paul Police Officer Scott Swensen provided guidance to Sergeant Flor, as Swensen was the Family Liaison Officer for the North Saint Paul Police response of the on-duty death of Officer Richard Crittenden on September 7th, 2009. Swensen was able to give Flor advice on addressing the position from a first-hand perspective. Sergeant Flor spoke of Swensen's aid saying, "Scott told me 'I've been where you are, I'm just eight months ahead of you'." Sergeant Flor pointed out that functioning as the Family Liaison Officer is a long and emotionally draining process on the officer, and that the officer needs to prepare for putting in eighteen to twenty-two hour long workdays. Not only did Sergeant Flor have sacrifice to provide for the Bergerons, but his family also paid the price- in Sergeant Flor's instance, he admits getting only a couple of hours of sleep a day at best among other issues. Sergeant Flor

pointed out that it was good that the Bergeron family had two officers they were familiar with to aid them. Having two officers allows one officer to focus on logistics and planning while the second officer can focus directly on family issues and requests was ideal from Sergeant Flor's observations; and Officer Steven Hiebert a friend of the Bergerons, was an ideal fit. For additional support, Maplewood Police Chief Thomalla granted Sergeant Flor around the clock use of a marked police patrol car in the performance of his duties allowing him parking accommodations in his tasks away from the Bergeron home. Sergeant Flor said Chief Thomalla reassured him "Tim whatever you need, we'll take care of it. Just make sure you do it right, because Joe, Gail, and the family deserve it."

Doing it right is also a duty of others involved.

"Paperwork processing for benefits can be a nightmare," Sergeant Flor points out and suggested making it a priority to complete and submit all paperwork for survivor benefits with extreme haste. Some programs are quick and some take longer, correctly expediting paperwork will alleviate some of this. Coupled with this, Sergeant Flor advises to have all memorial funds set up in the spouse's name as soon as possible. In this context, Chief Thomalla gave his support again saying, "Ok, get it done Tim. We'll worry about the bills later" and that is the spirit where this must occur.

Regarding advice to those in local government administration, Sergeant Flor in addition to the above gave the following:

- Offer, provide, and encourage utilization of incident debriefing and counseling resources.
- Allow special reassignment of multiple officers in incident response posts that will generate overtime and be prepared and supportive of it. By adding personnel to the ICS response team to cut overtime, the system will become cumbersome and cause mistakes and breaks in communication (leading to extra efforts- a.k.a. overtime). Prepare for overtime and leave hours to reach several hundred, especially if the officer's death occurs within your jurisdiction due to an extensive criminal investigation.
- Prepare for additional expenditures with overtime for some time after the incident from covering open shifts, training a new officer, additional support efforts by city staff, and other associated costs.
- Get all monies due to the family as quickly as possible to help with their daily bills.

Sergeant Flor pointed out many things in his interview but few were as sobering as the fact that Sergeant Bergeron was planning to retire in January 2011, and was killed a mere eight months short. Sergeant Flor openly admitted in the interview that he has not had time to grieve the loss of his friend. Flor closed the interview with the observation that "The rest of the work I have to do is take care of my head and my heart."

***Public Information Officer: Chief Paul Schnell, Hastings Police Department
(former Sergeant and P.I.O. with the St. Paul Police Department).***

Chief Schnell points out that there are several issues to be aware of during the preliminary response to a line-of-duty death.

“You have the case at hand. You have the family-sensitive issues. You have law-enforcement family issues. In this particular case, there is the cross jurisdictional issues. And you cannot have a police-involved shooting without the political considerations.”

Just as LEMA may have shown up on your doorstep before you informed them, so will the media, Schnell assured.

“The media is going to know before any official release, because they will be dialed in on who was shot and their status.”

“It’s not intentional it just happens” he stated in regards to the leaking of information prior to any official statements.

Chief Schnell made it clear several times that organizations in need with help with public information tasks need to allow others to help out that have the skill and experience.

“Many cities have someone that does communications or marketing. I would not use them in that capacity at all. It should be someone that has public safety or policing experience, period. [The media] want to know all about the

officer's life and accomplishments. I would say I want someone that comes from the law enforcement industry for that PIO function. This may not sit well with management or staff. There is a lot of things that [marketing staff] may be able to do, but in the unfolding of this incident I want a public safety person who's going to anticipate the questions in ways that a non-public safety person can't."

Adding more to the media relations aspect, Schnell advises to give the media a full briefing about the wishes of the family of the fallen officer, set parameters of what is and is not acceptable or allowed. This will set fair but firm outlines of conduct for the media to recognize and follow. Ask the media to use context-related photographs or video shots and no "weeping widow" close face shots or similar pictures.

"Keep it sensitive, not sensational" Schnell advised. "But, be realistic about the demands you place on the media." Work to instill an air of respect and don't try to lock-down the media.

"These police officers are public servants, and the stories about them are significant to the public. We have to give the public access to some of that, even if we don't like it."

"A line-of-duty death scenario will have regional, if not statewide impact", Schnell states. "With this being the case, juggling the interests of local (public access) media and regional or national media can be difficult. The local access channels may insist on being the primary providers of pool feed cameras, as it

was their officer that fell.” This desire to be the spearhead for broadcasting must be measured within the scope of the stations technical capabilities, in order to provide the coverage and broadcasting to the local, regional, and even statewide areas.

“Keep in mind, and don’t panic about the fact that internal communication glitches are going to happen” Schell assured in regards to the planning and operations of the memorial and funeral services. In his role as primary PIO, Chief Schnell also supported by public/media relations experts Andy Skoogman of the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Holli Drinkwine for the Ramsey County Sheriff’s Department, and Sergeant Jesse Garcia of Minneapolis Police.

When asked about the best way public administrators and officials can help, Schnell highlights that these people can provide a context to the incident by describing what an line-of-duty death incident like this means to their community, how it affects the community, and how the community will rally and recover.

“I think from the very beginning, the message has to be about recovery. Recognize the incident, and the pain, but keep the community’s eyes on the horizon by reassuring your community that this is a difficult time ‘But as a community, we are going to come out of this.’”

Service Coordination, Formation & Movement, and Staging: Commander Kevin Casper, St. Paul Police Department (SPPD Incident Commander).

Saint Paul Police Chief John Herrington appointed Commander Casper as the Saint Paul Police Department incident commander for the planning and performance of Sergeant Bergeron's funeral. Commander Casper oversaw the staging, service coordination, formation and movement, emergency vehicle muster area for attending officers, security, and other tasks needing action outside of the Saint Paul Cathedral. Commander Casper relied on a capable support staff formed by commanders and ranking members of the Saint Paul Police Department in carrying out these duties.

"I reviewed the parking plan, I reviewed the formation plan, and then we discussed whether the plan was viable and what issues were related to it. It was important that we had a solid plan related to parking all the squad cars. We had a solid plan for the procession coming in and leaving. We had a solid plan of where all the [attendees] were going to go for the formation. We had a solid plan of how we were going to get the formation into the building so that L.E.M.A. could take over inside." Simplifying the scope of his command, Commander Casper stated, "we handled the external components outside the Cathedral, L.E.M.A. was inside."

In the performance of these duties, Commander Casper knew that the officers of the Saint Paul Police Department would be at their best in performance of these duties.

“This was a Maplewood function, not a Saint Paul function. We were there to support Maplewood, not be in the limelight.”

Commander Casper gave solid advice for public administrators and officials on how to support the roles that Saint Paul officers fulfilled on several points. He first pointed out the need for an individual to take the helm as a point of contact for outside agencies or jurisdictions calling in to offer aid and assistance to the affected community.

“There are so many resources that people try to throw at you because they realize how traumatic this is for a small jurisdiction and that can be really overwhelming to have that many [resources offered], and people just show up out of the blue to help.”

Adding to this, Commander Casper had the following point he stressed on how an administrator or official can help with the event.

“I think the number one way to help out, is to identify the V.I.P.s. One of the things that I found challenging is the people that showed up that would be in the category of V.I.P.s like county attorneys. Someone has to reach out to those folks. I saw my role as having to accommodate them when they showed up on scene, but someone should have reached out to them ahead of time. It is identifying all those groups of people that have some association with law enforcement that you are not aware of. It is a challenge to see a group of five county attorneys walk up saying ‘where do we go?’ when I did not even know they were coming. Situations like that are not frustrating, but [these people] are

definitely stakeholders in this event we do so we must accommodate them. City officials need to identify dignitaries invited to the service, such as governors, elected officials, and others. To me, city officials are the gatekeepers for this. It is their city, they decide if they want the governor invited or not. It is nice to get that locked down of who exactly we are allowing to come and be a part of this. Not knowing this can be frustrating.”

Adding to the ways local officials can help, Commander Casper closed with how to help your fellow officials when it comes to making the call to L.E.M.A.

“In hindsight had they not [made the call] that would be something officials in need should know, that L.E.M.A. is *the* resource out there; and to share that information with other officials that if you’re in this situation, there is this group L.E.M.A. out there to help.”

***Procession Officer: Sergeant Merci Loeks, North St. Paul Police
Department.***

Sergeant Merci Loeks, like several members of the incident response team, revisited the role she held assisting with the funeral proceedings for Officer Richard Crittenden of the North Saint Paul Police Department nine months earlier.

When asked what the most important task in preparing for the funeral procession was, Sergeant Loeks noted a solid grasp on timing was crucial. She, and several others, worked at timing out the processional route to determine timing for the family to leave the St. Paul Cathedral on their respective procession. This was to assist in the upholding the ‘cardinal rule’ of L.E.M.A.: The family never waits.

“I think the most useful thing for the procession is timing it out...and to know how many vehicles [are participating].”

Sergeant Loeks also cites the need for assistance with traffic control details. Whether it is making sure to secure intersections along the route, or keeping the path of the procession open and traversable, there is a large need for people to perform this task.

Another point to remember in upholding the directive of never keeping the surviving family waiting is that attendees to the services must be punctual. While this is not an issue for most mourners this can be a sticking point with the “V.I.P.s” that wish to attend. Sergeant Loeks observes, “It’s a very long, long

couple of days so [the family members] just get exhausted. I think the sooner you can get that going the better.” The rank, caliber, or notoriety of a public figure that wishes to attend the service should not be a reason for the family to wait if they deem it unreasonable. This process is for, and about, the family. They are the focal point and it shall never shift to relent for the schedule of a public figure that runs late or is “squeezing it in” to their schedule. While most public managers and officials reading this are at the local level and if the incident is in your jurisdiction, this does not necessarily apply to you- this incident will *become* your schedule for the time of the aftermath, planning, and services. Noting this is to keep in mind that the family is first and no other person, no matter their political or social status, are *never* allowed to intentionally or unintentionally derail the ceremonies honoring the fallen officer and their family to best suit that person’s intentions or reasons.

When asked what advice she would give to local government administrators, Sergeant Loeks had several points, but one was the most prominent: “As much as you plan for something like this, even for city managers, it’s difficult to do because you’re just stunned and shocked and angry and a lot of things.”

She closed the interview with a statement shared by every member of the incident response and all others involved, “I hope I never have to do it again.”

Cemetery Coordination Officers: Commander John Maslowski and Sergeant Gordy Anderson, Ramsey County Sheriff's Department.

Commander Maslowski and Sergeant Anderson were the Cemetery Coordinator and Deputy Cemetery Coordinator respectively for the law enforcement funerals of Sergeant Bergeron, as well as the funerals for Officer Richard Crittenden and Ramsey County Reserve Deputy Mike Wilken. These services were all very different from each other. Just to Compare Sergeant Bergeron's services with the service for Officer Crittenden, Sergeant Bergeron's services were in multiple locations while Officer Crittenden's memorial was contained in one location. Taking the location in to account regarding the size, location, access/egress availability, and even topography became a task for Commander Maslowski.

"We make sure we have enough resources to accommodate all the people, [and] their vehicles."

These jobs required more than just logistic abilities; these individuals had to be skilled in procuring equipment and services. Sergeant Anderson pointed out that no agency is an island in these times, and other local government agencies and personnel are willing to help.

"People are so good about this kind of thing. People are good with an officer's funeral about [providing] equipment. Sometimes you just don't have the resources, and everybody helps out."

Commander Maslowski added that logistics and resource needs may dovetail together when deciding “Where are we placing all of the cars once they arrive, how are they being placed, how are they being stacked like cordwood?”

“Not only [how] to get in, but egress to get out. Once they are out of their vehicles, [the officers] have been there for four or five hours if they have been in the parade route. They need restroom facilities, they need water, and they need snack food. Cops will, first thing in the morning, make sure their brass is polished and their car is washed and shiny, their uniform is spotless- and skip breakfast. Then, all of a sudden at one o’clock at the funeral...they have to stand in the sun for an hour, and we did have it happen, officers were tipping over. So you’ve got to make sure you have water, snacky food...and you can never have enough porta-potties.”

Sergeant Anderson added to this regarding the maintenance of the venue.

“We were there early,” referring to St. John’s Cemetery. “City workers were cutting the grass early and were just making everything look really good. And to me, that is a huge thing that the cemetery is looking good for the family, for the media. And those workers were out the night before and that morning.”

A professional-grade incident response team will be aware of these things, and be prepared to address them. “It’s important to have a good team,” observed Sergeant Anderson. He points out that calling in L.E.M.A. is “Like bringing the ‘A-team’ in...because with something like this, [officer funerals] are all different. They are really good at what they do.”

When asked for what advice they would give to local government officials in this position, Commander Maslowski shared his insight.

“This report should reflect that when an agency does suffer an in the line of duty death and L.E.M.A. is involved, and I strongly encourage everybody to get L.E.M.A. involved to some extent or another- they’re the experts in the field. I strongly encourage everyone to listen to L.E.M.A. If L.E.M.A. is there to offer their assistance [they] do a good job of listening to the city [elected] officials, and what the police department has for their wishes and wants. But most importantly what are the family’s wishes and those take priority.”

“Keep an open mind, nothing is etched in stone,” commented Maslowski. Commander Maslowski finished with how to help with problem solving during the response. If there is a red-tape issue, “Don’t tell me we can’t, tell me how we can.”

Safety Officer: Chief Steve Lukin, Fire Chief & Emergency Management Director, City of Maplewood.

Chief Lukin fit the role of safety officer well using his experience as Maplewood's Emergency Management Director as well as fulfilling the same role with the response team for the line-of-duty death of Officer Richard Crittenden.

While Chief Lukin's duties were to provide safety to each facet of the incident response and memorial services, he made sure to point out that his primary focus was to ensure the safety of the Bergeron family at all locations. To ensure this, Lukin stationed two medics within close proximity to serve solely the Bergeron family at all times, including the medics' ambulance following the family's vehicles in the funeral procession. To provide for other safety needs, Lukin called upon the Saint Paul Fire Department and Allina Ambulance Service for the service and internment locations. To provide continuity of fire service for the citizens of Maplewood, an incident commander for the day's fire services, Chief Jeff Anderson of the Oakdale Fire Department, oversaw operations on the day Sergeant Bergeron's funeral procession.

Additionally, Chief Lukin tapped resources at the Salvation Army to provide water and aid facilities to attending officers at the St. Paul Cathedral and St. John's Cemetery, and provided continual situational reports of weather conditions to command staff and the family. The task he did complete that was outside the normal scope of duties of a Safety Officer, was to arrange for transportation of Sergeant Bergeron's immediate family by limousine, and

extended family members, retired police and fire employees, and current city employees by busses¹⁰.

When asked how complex the process of successfully planning a funeral for an officer lost in the line of duty Chief Lukin frankly asserts “You’re planning the state fair, for all practical purposes, in two to three days. It’s almost that difficult.” Additionally, Lukin gave several points for consideration by administrators in this situation.

- Keep as much of the services and procession within the confines of your jurisdiction, otherwise resources will stretch too thin and additional resource requests will follow, potentially adding strain to the city.
- Everyone involved must remain flexible with the planning and implementation of the services and procession, as multiple factors will be changing by the minute and the response to those changes needs to be nimble and swift.
- Administrators should be understanding of expenditures within reason, but also know when and how much of city dollars is outbound for the incident response.
- Government administrators, for all practical purposes, have little interaction with the incident response team, other than the occasional situation report. As administrators, officials, and others

¹⁰ Chief Lukin contracted motor coach/commercial passenger class busses. School busses are certainly not proper for this delicate task. Also take notice- provide only black, tasteful limos for the family.

are not entrenched with the process, these people cannot try to dictate the logistics or operations of the events. Chief Lukin puts this plainly saying, "These guys...know what they do, and they do it well. So you just have to let them do it."

Conclusion: May you *never* have to use this report

If you have found yourself struck by the tragedy of losing a police officer, you are not alone. There have been those that have gone before you, and unfortunately there will be those that will come after you. Ask for help, whether you think you need it or not- you will. You will feel numb, shocked, angry, shattered, and a great many other things, but do not feel alone and do not panic. Do not fear that you are alone, for help will come.

Keep your eyes on the horizon. Your staff, citizens, and many others will look to you to right the ship. You will need to be the master and commander (within reason) of your community's recovery efforts, as well as needing to be the public eye's voice and face of recovery. *However*, don't take on too much- which is both easy to say and is easily done. It may be your strongpoint to be able to multitask and shoulder many loads, but don't do it here. Stay focused on doing the pinnacle things to the best of your ability, and have faith in others to do the same as they help you with the details or tasks. Give the authority to your staff to make the important decisions they need to, and support their decisions without second-guessing them.

"Give it over to other people, because it is draining. It carries on for weeks, if not months, afterward. Give up the [tasks] you can." –Sgt. Merci Loeks, North St. Paul Police & LEMA Procession Officer.

Start now on working and fostering an environment of family support and mutual well being between your officers and their department, and the officers

and your city government. Be proactive in establishing connections with local psychological wellness professionals, employee assistance programs, and chaplaincy resources. Not only will you need these resources after an incident, they will aid in the augmentation of a solid family support structure now. Tap the resources of Wills for Heroes, Concerns of Police Survivors, the Fraternal Order of Police, and very importantly the Law Enforcement Family Support Network to help you begin such a program or to build upon an existing program in use.

Always remember to provide immediate aid and assistance to the family of a fallen officer, whether it is their spouse, household, their parents, or siblings. Initial support must also become continued support for the weeks, months, and years following the loss of the officer. Help the family with tasks ranging across the spectrum from the gauntlet of obtaining survivors' benefits, to the thoughtful gestures like dropping off groceries or visiting with the family.

And, in all of this, never forget the two universal and cardinal truths regarding a line-of-duty death scenario.

- 1) *No two incidents will ever, ever, be the same.*
- 2) *In all decisions during the planning of the fallen officer's memorial and any related concerns, **the wishes and best interests of the family will always come first.***

In writing this report, I have created an academic paradox. The issue is this: while I wish to impart a set of data for you, the local government official, administrator, manager, and leader; it is my greatest hope that you will never have to use any of it. Indeed, I would rather see this report shelved and gather an amount of dust that would rival a pharaoh's tomb. I also know that the truly prudent and wise of all leaders are familiar to hoping for the best while being prepared for the worst.

While being prepared for such times is admirable, you will never be *fully* prepared. In our time of loss, we didn't have all the answers, and there wasn't a way we necessarily could have. But what the City of Maplewood did have was a remedy built of courage, constitution, and heart to face the situation together as a 'city family' only could. From every member of the Maplewood Police Department, sworn and support staff alike, to the city staff and our leadership; the ideals of compassion, loyalty, faith, and bravery were exemplified in the name and memory of Sergeant Joseph Bergeron.

Appendix A: Survivor Resources

The Minnesota Law Enforcement Memorial Association and others have provided a list of these long-term and one-time benefits provided by government and non-government organizations. While not exhaustive (as there are many organizations that provide benefits to members), this primer list is an excellent resource of benefits available to an officer's family.

- Benefit from the State of Minnesota. (\$125,000+) Minnesota Statute 299A.44. Refer to the Statute and correspond with the Commissioner of Public Safety, 442 Cedar Street, St. Paul, MN 55101. Website: www.dps.state.mn.us
- Benefit from the U.S. Government. (\$300,000+) Public Law 94-430. Correspond with the Benefit Office, Bureau of Justice Assistance, 810 -7th StN.W., Washington, DC 20531. Website: www.psob.gov
- Benefit from the Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association (\$10,000). Correspond with the MPPOA, 327 York Ave, St. Paul, Minnesota 55130. Website: www.mppoa.com

- Benefit from the Minnesota 100 Club. (\$3,000) Correspond with the Minnesota 100 Club, 3030 Centre Point Road, Suite 400, Roseville, MN 55113 Website: www.minnesotalOOclub.com
- Benefits from the Minnesota Law Enforcement Memorial Association. Survivors are eligible for emergency economic assistance (recommended not to exceed \$1,500) psychological counseling and scholarship programs. Correspond with the Minnesota Law Enforcement Memorial Association, 614 Aqua Circle, Lino Lakes, MN 55014. Website: www.mnlema.org
- Benefit from the Midwest Gang Investigators Association. (specific amount) Correspond with the Midwest Gang Investigators Association, P.O. Box 3602, Omaha, NE 68102. Website: www.mgia.org
- Benefit from the TASER Foundation for a memorial grant. Please contact TASER Foundation at 17800 North 85th St., Scottsdale, Arizona 85255. Website: www.taser.com
- Wal-Mart, contact your local store for information on the Safe Neighborhoods Grant application.

- Benefit available from the National Law Enforcement and Firefighters Children's Foundation. Grants and Scholarships may be obtained by contacting the above foundation at 1414 Avenue of the Americas - 6th Floor, New York, NY 10019.
Website: www.NLEAFCF.org
- Benefit from the American Federation of Police and Concerned Citizens. Survivors are eligible for financial assistance, grief counseling, scholarships, holiday and birthday gifts and summer camps. Please contact the above organization at 6350 Horizon Dr, Titusville, Florida 32780. Website: www.AFP-CC.org
- Health Insurance Benefit for Survivors. Minnesota State Statute 299A.465 requires employer to pay for continuing health insurance of survivors. Contact officer's employer.
- Benefit from deceased officers' State, County or City retirement plan (amount of benefit varies). Correspond with specific retirement plan.
- Benefit from deceased officers' Workers Compensation Coverage. Correspond with Workers Compensation Division of

the State Department of Labor and Industry, 443 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155. Website: www.dol.state.mn.us

- Benefit from Group Life Insurance and Accidental Death carried by the deceased officer's employer. Contact officer's employer.
- Benefit from U.S. Government for deceased peace officers who qualify under Social Security (amount of benefit varies) per Social Security Act. Correspond with the nearest office of Social Security Administration. Website: www.ssa.gov
- Benefit from U.S. Government for deceased officers who are qualified veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces (amount of benefit varies), per Veterans Administration Act. Correspond with nearest office of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Website: www.va.gov
- Benefit from any individual life insurance on the deceased officer. Contact your insurance agent.
- Benefit from the National Rifle Association (specific amount). Children of officers who were members are eligible for a

scholarship program and death benefits. Correspond with NRA Law Enforcement Relations, 11250 Waples Millroad, Fairfax, VA 22030. Website: www.NRAHQ.org

- Benefits from the National Sheriffs Association, Fraternal Order of Eagles, Knights of Columbus, National Guard, Military Order of the Purple Heart. Children of officers who were members are eligible for medical assistance, educational grants and death benefits. Correspond with each organization if the officer was a member.
- Benefit from the Minnesota Crime Victims' Reparations Board (amount of benefit varies). Minnesota Statute 299B. Contact the Crime Victims' Reparation Board, Suite 2300, Bremer Tower 445 Minnesota Street, St. Paul, MN 55101. Website: www.OJP.state.mn.us
- Benefits from other associations and organizations in which the deceased officer was a member. Correspond with appropriate associations and organizations.

- Benefit from lawsuit brought against the person who was responsible for the officer's death. Consult with a private attorney regarding the feasibility of such a lawsuit.
- Benefits from the State of Minnesota. State Statute 299A.45. Spouses and children are eligible for tuition and fees when enrolled in a state college or university. Correspond with the Commissioner of Public Safety, 444 Cedar Street, St. Paul, MN 55101. Website: www.dps.state.mn.us
- Benefit from the U.S. Government. Dependent children or Spouses are eligible for educational assistance. Correspond with Benefits Office, Bureau of Justice Assistance, 810-7th St NW, Washington, DC 20531. Website: www.psob.gov
- Benefit from Concerns of Police Survivors (COPS). Spouses and children are eligible for an educational scholarship program and psychological counseling expenses. Correspond with Concerns of Police Survivors, P.O. Box 3199, Camdenton, Missouri 65020. Website: www.nationalcops.org

- Benefit from the Fraternal Order of Police. Spouses are eligible for educational scholarships which will relate to a career situation. Please contact the FOP at 701-Marriott Drive, Nashville, TN 37214. Website: www.fop.net
- Benefit from the International Association of Chiefs of Police. Survivors are eligible for a scholarship program. Please contact the IACP Foundation; 515- North Washington St., Alexandria, Virginia 22314. Website: www.theiacpfoundation.org
- Benefit from Camp Amanda. This camp helps children ages kindergarten through high school deal with the loss of a parentis or a sibling. It is no cost to the children or their parents. Please contact the Minnesota Foundation for Children and Camp Amanda. Website CPOPOWITZ@campamandaminn.com or call (763)550-0157.
- Survivors are entitled to a plaque from the Military Order of the Purple Heart for officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty. Please contact Department Adjutant, Veterans Service Bldg., 20 West 12 St., St. Paul, MN 55155. Website: www.purpleheart.org

- Income Tax Exemptions. Federal Law (public Law 105-34 and Public Law 107-15) exclude certain survivor annuities from taxation. Please contact a tax accountant to understand this federal exemption and any state law exemption that may exist.
- Benefit from the Minnesota Bar Association. Survivors immediate family is eligible for a no cost will; health directive and power of attorney documents from the Wills for Heroes program. Please contact the Wills for Heroes Coordinator at www.mnbar.org (click programs) or call Susan Link at (612) 672-8349.
- Federal Benefit Amendment to Public Law 94-430. Hometown Heroes Survivors Act of 2003 amends public law to allow full benefits to officers whose death was the result of a heart attack or stroke while on duty.
- Workers Compensation (additional benefit) Minnesota State Statute 176.011 Subd. 15 Sec. b Occupational Disease. This statute allows benefits if death was caused from certain

presumed occupational diseases such as undulant fever, myocarditis, coronary sclerosis, pneumonia or an infectious or a communicable disease.

- The State Memorial Monument for officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty is located in St. Paul at the State Capitol grounds. For further information contact the Minnesota Law Enforcement Memorial Association, 614 Aqua Circle, Lino Lakes, MN 55014. 763-542-8645. Website: www.mnlema.org
- The National Monument for officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty is located in Washington, D.C. at Judiciary Square. For further information contact National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial, 400-7th St, Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20004. Website: www.NLEOMF.com
- There is a national and state organization of surviving family members called (COPS) Concerns of Police Survivors. Website: www.nationalcops.org. For further information contact the MN COPS office: Gretchen O'Neil, c/o Rochester Police Department, 101 SE 4th Street, Rochester, MN 55904.

Phone: 507-259-7010. Email: gol71@live.com or visit the website www.minncops.org

- Special assistance is available to survivors if the officer was a member of MPPOA -LDF (Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association - Legal Defense Fund). If this is the case, survivors should contact MPPOA and they will provide assistance in the recovery of all known death benefits. For further information, contact MPPOA, Executive Director, 327 York Avenue, St Paul, MN 55130. Website: www.mppoa.com
- The Minnesota Fraternal Order of Police (F.O.P.) can provide special assistance to survivors if the officer was a member of the F.O.P. Legal Defense Fund. If this is the case, survivors should contact the F.O.P. and they will provide assistance in the recovery of all known death benefits. For further information, contact the Minnesota Fraternal Order of Police State Lodge, P.O. Box 270026, Golden Valley, MN 55427. Website: www.mnfop.com

Appendix B: LEFSN CI Contact form sample

Notification Preferences Critical Incident Contact Form

This notification preference form is designed to address officer and family member preferences immediately following a Critical Incident. Studies have shown that the first 24 hours after a critical incident are crucial for reducing the stress related to the event. Notification & support are important components of the process.

Peace Officer Name: _____

Date: _____

1. Identify your preference for a department monitor/representative to assist you in the event of a CI.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
2. Indicate your preferences for a clergy member.

_____ no clergy representative requested

_____ on call department clergy member

_____ please contact the following clergy member

3. Who do you want to notify your family members?

a.

b. c.

Law Enforcement Family Support Network, March 2008

Family Member Notification Procedures

Please indicate your notification preferences for family members the event of a critical incident involving your officer.

1. Please identify the department representatives who you would prefer to have contact you.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

2. Please notify the following individuals in the event of a critical incident: (please provide phone(s)/email)
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.

3. Who do you want to provide support, child care, or elder care to your family members?
 - a.
 - b.

c.

4. Please list school names/ numbers for minor children who may be at school at the time of an incident. Indicate names/contact information for the schools and the individuals who have permission to remove your children from school.

a.

b.

c.

5. Please indicate any other information the contacting department should know about your preferences.

Law Enforcement Family Support Network, March 2008

APPENDIX B-2: St. Paul Police Emergency Notification Form DRAFT

Notification Preferences

Critical Incident Contact and Line-of-Duty Death Form



The following information you are asked to provide is confidential and will be used only in the event of a line-of-duty death or a critical incident. ***The information you are asked to provide is optional.***

This notification preference form is designed to address officer and family member preferences immediately following a critical incident. Studies have shown that the first 24 hours after a critical incident are crucial for reducing the stress related to the event. Notification and support are important components of the process.

Officer's Name: _____

Date: _____

Family Information

Spouse/Significant Other's Name:

Home Address (if different):

City:

State:

Zip:

Home Phone (if different) :

Work Phone:

Cell Phone:

Other Contact Number(s):

Names and dates of birth of children

1.

dob:

2.

dob:

3.

dob:

4.

dob:

5.

dob:

6.

dob:

7.

dob:

Do you wish your ex-significant other be contacted in the case of serious injury or in the case of a line of duty death?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please provide name, address and telephone number(s) of your ex-significant other(s) you would like notified:

- Please list the name, address and telephone number(s) of your children living outside the home and key relatives (parents, siblings, in-law, friends, etc.) you would like to have notified:

a.
b.
c.
d.
e.
f.
g.
h.

- Is there anyone you would like to have contacted to assist your family with funeral arrangements/or related matters who is not listed?

- **Funeral Arrangement Preferences**

Funeral home: _____

Religion: _____

Religious site (church, synagogue, temple): _____

Presiding Clergy (name and contact): _____

Do you wish to have visitation? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, how many days/evenings? _____

Do you wish to have an open casket? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you wish to be buried in uniform or civilian clothes?

☐ Uniform ☐ Other

If other, what type of clothes or uniform? _____

Do you wish a law enforcement funeral? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Are you a member of the U.S. Armed Services? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Branch? _____

If yes, do you wish a military funeral? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Are you a Vet? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you wish your remains to be cremated or buried? ☐ Cremated ☐ Buried

If buried, where do you wish to be laid to rest? _____

Do you have a plot already purchased? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If so, what plot number? _____

If cremated, what are your wishes for your remains? _____

List any preferences you have to serve as pallbearers:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

Alternates: _____

Do you wish to have any particular songs or hymns to be played at the religious service? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please list _____

Do you wish to have a eulogy? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please indicate who you prefer to deliver the eulogy: _____

Do you wish flowers to be omitted in lieu of contributions to a charity or memorial?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, which charity or memorial: _____

Family Member Notification Procedures

Please indicate your notification preferences for family members in the event of a critical incident involving your officer.

1. Please identify the department representative(s) who you would prefer to have contact your family members and other individuals:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

2. Please notify the following individuals in the event of a critical incident: (please provide phone(s)/email):

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

3. Who do you want to provide support, child care, or elder care to your family members? (Please provide phone number(s))

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

4. Please list school names/numbers for minor children who may be at school at the time of an incident. Indicate names/contact information for the schools and the individuals who have permission to remove your children from school.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

5. Please indicate any other information the contacting department should know about your preferences.

• **Additional Information**

Name, address and phone number of your attorney: _____

Do you have a will? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Where is it located? _____

Do you have a trust? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Where is it located? _____

Do you have other special documents, if so what and where are they located? _____

List any life insurance policies you may have:

Company	Location
a.	
b.	
c.	

List names of your financial accounts:

Location	Name of Institution
a.	
b.	
c.	
d.	
e.	
f.	

Are there any special requests or directions you would like to have followed upon your death that have not been asked and what are they?

Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX C:



Law Enforcement Family Support Network
www.lawenforcementfamilysupport.org

Getting Started: *the administrator's guide to free and low cost strategies for improving officer and family supports*

Police work is a uniquely stressful occupation requiring officers to silence valid feelings and emotions in order to handle traumatic and often dangerous situations. The emotional control necessary to successfully perform in this type of environment contributes to long term health issues and hinders communication and relationships within law enforcement families. *Officer and family education and preparedness* are essential to help identify and manage the inevitable and cumulative stress that occurs in a law enforcement career.

Multiple cumulative career stress issues impact peace officers. Among the well documented physical and emotional health issues are increased cancer and heart conditions, a workplace culture with high alcohol abuse risk factors and an increased risk for divorce and officer suicide.

A state wide law enforcement administrator, officer and family member survey completed in 2008 identified critical gaps in officer and family preparation and support for addressing cumulative career stress issues. The following four areas identify unilateral priorities among survey respondents and suggest low cost strategies to address the areas of concern.

I. Share basic department information

- ☐ Offer a Family Academy modeled after a citizen's academy. Include department philosophy, history, and current department statistics. Consider information about the use of force, special units or assignments within the department, firearms safety, internal affairs investigations and critical incident policy and procedures. Deliver in person, on line or via printed materials.
- ☐ Create and disseminate department history and philosophy for new hires and their families
- ☐ Create a department family email list. An automated list serve allows the family members to update their own email addresses. Use this communication tool to send weekly or monthly department news.

II. Invest in and share helpful resources

Purchase multiple copies for loan

- ☐ Gilmartin's *Emotional Survival for Law Enforcement*
<http://www.emotionalsurvival.com/hypervigilance.htm>
- ☐ Kirschman's *I love a Cop*. <http://www.amazon.com/Love-Cop-What-Police-Families/dp/1572301937>
- ☐ Pass along relevant mental and physical health information as it applies to officers and their families



Law Enforcement Family Support Network
www.lawenforcementfamilysupport.org

III. Incentivize officer and family usage of available information

- ☐ Consider assigning the modules from the Law Enforcement Family Support Network <http://www.lawenforcementfamilysupport.org/> as officer and staff training. Set aside the 30 minutes per module needed to complete them during work time.

LEFSN Modules

[Law Enforcement Families: What You Need to Know](#)

[Personal Health and Critical Incident Events](#)

[Staying Healthy: Managing Job-Related Stress](#)

[Emergency Planning in a Law Enforcement Family Unique Considerations](#)

- ☐ Introduce the modules to all new and current family members. Encourage family members to complete the modules
- ☐ Introduce the module as a resources to new hire families
- ☐ Resend information about available resources following a department critical incident
- ☐ Consider offering lunch with the Chief when the modules are completed by family members

IV. Communicate policy and identify processes to address concerns about critical incident notification

- ☐ Identify a process to review department Critical Incident policy and notification procedures with all officers *and family members* annually.
- ☐ Provide printed materials related to the notification process *distribute to all family members*.
- ☐ Review the Critical Incident Contact form located on the LEFSN website <http://www.lawenforcementfamilysupport.org/> Click on the **Education** tab, select **Forms** and click on **Critical Incident Contact** form. Customize the form based upon individual department needs.
- ☐ Create policy that includes disseminating a family notification preferences form to all **family members** when hired and implement a schedule for **annual updates**. (Departments often do this during the annual performance review process) Family member notification is different than officer notification in critical ways.

Peer Resources

Web based family academy; Saint Paul Police Department
<http://www.lawenforcementfamilysupport.org/> Education / SPPD Family Academy

In person regional family academy, Saint Cloud Police Department, Officer Jessica Schlieman, jessica.schlieman@ci.stcloud.mn.us 320-345-4364

Family day at the department, Minnetrista Police Department, Chief David Kolb,

APPENDIX D: LINE-OF-DUTY DEATH SAMPLE POLICY

Dublin, Ohio

Division of Police

General Order Line of Duty Death Policy

Purpose:

The Dublin Division of Police recognizes the fact that when a line of duty death, or serious injury occurs the agency must be prepared. The way in which the agency responds to the family and co-workers at the time of the death and in subsequent weeks is vitally important. The agency can either assist in the recovery or add to the emotional and psychological trauma that they are experiencing by their actions, or lack of action. This policy will attempt to specifically address vitally important issues that must be planned for in advance of a line of duty death.

Policy:

It shall be the responsibility of the Dublin Division of Police to provide assistance to the immediate family of an employee who dies in the line-of-duty. This assistance is applicable whether the employee was killed feloniously or accidentally, while an active member of the department. We view our responsibilities to include the clarification and comprehensive study of survivor benefits, to provide tangible and intangible emotional support

during this traumatic period, and continuation of contact and care after the funeral, until so indicated by the survivors. Complete implementation of this policy is predicated on the wishes of the affected member of the agency, if known by the agency. (See LOD Information Form). In order to provide support for shift personnel and/or personnel involved in the same function or with the same duties, the agency will require those members to participate in a debriefing at the end of the tour of duty and will make continuing support available. The agency will coordinate CISD activities for any family members who may wish to access this service. The first line supervisor and/or the Communications Center shall, as soon as practical, begin notifications as follow.

Position Descriptions:

The following positions must be activated immediately upon a death or serious injury of an agency member. Each of these positions must be trained on their specific areas of responsibility. While each of these is outlined individually, it is also recognized that several positions may be combined and assigned to one person. Each individual assuming a functional responsibility will be responsible for maintaining resources and information for his/her function and have those resources readily available.

Family Liaison Representative: - This individual will be responsible for attending to the needs of the family of the agency member killed or seriously injured. This position will be the coordinating point for planning of any

visitation at the funeral home, the actual funeral and follow-up care for the family. Personnel assigned to this task will be accessible to the family at all times from the time they are notified through the end of the funeral, and following, as necessary. This assignment is responsible for assuring that the wishes of the family are followed closely throughout the funeral planning process and funeral. The family liaison representative will work closely with the department liaison representative during the process to obtain necessary approval for any expenditures.

Department Liaison Representative: - This individual must be a command level officer with the authority to allow the family liaison representative to make financial obligations and purchases. The department liaison representative will keep all agency personnel up to date on the plans and arrangements as he receives that information from the family liaison representative. The department liaison representative is the contact for any media representatives who may contact the department for information regarding the injury or death. Media releases, reports, etc., which are to be released regarding the death of any personnel shall be provided to the family of the employee prior to when they are released to the public. Additionally, absolutely no information regarding the death of an employee shall be released prior to the deceased personnel's family being notified.

Logistical Officer: - This individual will have the responsibility for contacting and arranging honor guard, color guard, bagpipe players, buglers, etc. The

logistical officer will work in very close contact with the family liaison representative to make sure the family wishes are carried out exactly.

Benefits Officer: - This assignment is responsible for compiling all death benefits due to the survivors. These benefits will be maintained in handbook that will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis. The benefit explanation booklet available through Ohio Concerns of Police Survivors shall be a part of this handbook. The benefits officer will work in conjunction with the Director of Personnel and Purchasing to assemble this information as soon as possible upon the death of a member and coordinate with the family liaison representative to provide this information to the survivors. The benefits officer will also prepare and file the necessary paperwork for these benefits on behalf of the family, as well as check the status of the claims until the benefits are paid to the survivor.

Survivor: - For the purposes of this policy the term survivor will apply first to the immediate family members of the deceased agency member. The surviving spouse will be the decision-maker regarding arrangements, and the person from whom the family liaison representative will take direction. Should an agency member be single, the family liaison representative will work directly with the surviving parents and adult children, if any.

Notification of Death:

1.Immediately upon a serious injury or death the family liaison

representative will be notified so that he/she can retrieve the agency member's emergency information.

2. The name of the deceased employee will NEVER be released to the media before immediate survivors living in the area are notified. The name of the involved employee shall never be transmitted over the radio system.
3. If there is knowledge of a medical problem with an immediate survivor, medical personnel will be dispatched to the residence to coincide with the death notification.
4. Notification WILL ALWAYS be made in person and will never be made alone. The Chief of Police (or designee), the assigned family liaison representative, the Department Chaplain (or the family's pastor) and/or the member's requested representative, as designated in the LOD Information form, will act as the informing representatives.
5. If the above-suggested persons are not readily accessible, notification should not be delayed until these people can assemble. If the agency member has not yet died, all attempts will be made to get the family to the hospital prior to the member's death.
6. When most public safety families see an agency representative at the home or place of work, they will know something is wrong. Ask to be admitted to the home or place of work. NEVER make a death notification on the doorstep. Gather everyone in the home and ask them to sit down. Inform them slowly and clearly of the information

you have on the incident. Make sure you use the employee's first name during the notification.

- 7.If the employee has already died, relay that information. NEVER give the family a false sense of hope. Use words like "dead" and "died" rather than "gone away" or "passed away."
- 8.If the family wants to go to the hospital, they should be transported via non-marked department vehicle. It is highly recommended that the family NOT drive themselves to the hospital. Should there be serious resistance and the family insists on driving, have an officer accompany them in the car.
- 9.The department should find out if there are any young children in the home. Notification representatives will be responsible for arranging immediate baby-sitting needs.
10. Because of the nature of possible radio transmissions, the officer transporting the family should notify the police personnel or hospital liaison at the hospital by phone that the family is enroute.
11. Surviving parents will also be afforded the courtesy of personal notification if they live in the same geographic area. If the employee was married, notification will be at the request of the deceased employee's spouse. In this case, the parents' notification team will be a department representative designated by the Chief of Police, another Department employee who knows the family well, and one of the other Department Chaplains (or the parents' Pastor).

12. If immediate survivors live out of town, request PERSONAL death notification from the public safety agency in that area. Logistical arrangements should enable simultaneous telephone contact with our agency.

Assisting the Family at the Hospital

1. The family liaison representative will be responsible for acting as the liaison for information between hospital staff and the family. Additional information regarding the member's condition will be transmitted from the family liaison to the departmental liaison for release to the rest of the agency.
2. The family of the employee will be afforded the opportunity to see the employee as soon as they wish and as soon as is practical. If it is possible for the family to be with and see the employee prior to death, immediate arrangements should be made. In the event of death prior to the family's arrival, the survivors should be allowed to see the deceased employee if they wish. While the family liaison representative should try to prepare the survivors for the condition of the employee's body, the family should not be overly protected from reality.
3. In addition to the family liaison representative, there will be at least one Dublin officer and chaplain present at the hospital at all times until the family departs. The primary responsibility of these personnel will be to

shield the family from media representatives, unless the family wishes to speak with them. Should the employee not be deceased, there will be at least one Dublin officer posted at the hospital at all times. This officer will have the responsibility of assisting the liaison officer, family and any other relatives who may congregate.

4. The departmental representative will make arrangements with the hospital for all worker's compensation related bills to be sent directly to the City of Dublin - Attention Ron Whittington, and make hospital personnel aware of the fact this is a worker's compensation claim. Bills received at the departmental representative's office will be processed by the agency, relieving the family of dealing with these details. Some medical bills must still be initially received by the injured officer, or if deceased, surviving spouse/family member.

Funeral:

1. As soon as practical, the family liaison representative will discuss arrangements with the survivor. The survivor must be made aware of the potential magnitude of the police funeral. All options for the service will be presented to the family. The survivor will make all decisions, and these decisions will be final even if not the wishes of the agency.
2. Members killed in the line of duty are eligible for certain ceremonial rituals at their showing hours and funeral. It must be reiterated that the

survivor has the final say regarding funeral planning. If any of the following services are desired, the following guidelines should be utilized. **Casket Guard:** Two officers from the Dublin Division of Police to stand guard at the casket during showing hours. This detail will include at least four officers, with two standing guard at periodic intervals. **Residence Guard:** A marked cruiser and officer will be posted outside the incapacitated or deceased employee's home from the time of the fatality or injury through the end of the funeral day or stay at the hospital. The duty of this detail is to discourage any visits from media or others, unless the family liaison representative indicates the family wishes to speak with the media. **This guard will only be provided to those officer's residences within the corporate limits of the City of Dublin.** **Honor Guard:** An honor guard contingent will be formed of Dublin officers to participate in the funeral service. They may act as pallbearers should the survivor wish to have them act in that capacity. The casket will be draped with an American casket flag that will be removed, folded and presented by the honor guard commander to the Chief of Police. The Chief of Police will then present the flag to the survivor at the gravesite. If there are parents of the deceased employee in attendance, a flag will also be presented to them. **Twenty-One Gun Salute:** This is to be arranged with The Columbus Police Department firing detail if the family wishes to have this tribute. **Bagpipes:** A bagpipe detail should be arranged for the

service. This can also be done through the Columbus Police Department Honor Guard. The bagpipes can be played at the funeral service site as well as the gravesite. **Taps:** Taps should be arranged for playing at the gravesite.

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